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GERMANY AND THE GERMAN EMPEROR

By

GEORGE HERBERT PERRIS

Author of "A Short History of War and Peace,"
"Russia in Revolution"

SECOND EDITION

LONDON: ANDREW MELROSE, LTD

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PREFACE TO SECOND EDITION

IN presenting this popular edition of *Germany and the German Emperor* to the public, the author, who is in Paris, would, it is certain, have desired to say something on the extraordinary change in the European condition that has taken place within the last few weeks. Profound as is Mr. Perris' study of Germany and the German people, it does not indicate that he attributed to Germany any but the most pacific intentions towards the world in general and to Great Britain in particular. In short Mr. Perris, like many another man of high ideals, accepted the German protests at their face value, and while his concluding chapter is a striking forecast of the inevitable war, he had no idea it would happen by acts of German aggression, by violation of treaties, and the making of an "infamous proposal" to this country to maintain neutrality while Germany was trying to beat France to the ground again—acts and proposals by which she has estranged the sympathy of civilization.

Nevertheless the book has a special value because of these facts. Written from the standpoint of a lover of peace and a believer in the destiny of the German people, it is yet an indictment of Germany and the policy which has led to the dramatic and far-reaching results of the last three weeks. The author shows that the present aggressive war by Germany was not an accident, but the inevitable outcome of a sinister policy pursued with patient persistent energy for at least twenty years. That Germany at this moment finds herself engaged in the "inevit-

able war " with Great Britain, is a tragedy from the German point of view, which no one will see with more apprehension than the German author of *Germany's Next War*. The next great war as anticipated in that amazingly frank book by General Von Bernhardi, was one in which Germany would be engaged in a war with England *alone*, in which the avowed issue was to be German supremacy or her passing as a great Power. As it happens, the game is not being played in this way, and Germany's disappointment is showing itself in an illuminating exhibition of very bad temper.

Mr. Perris is at present in Paris acting as a Special Correspondent to the *Daily Chronicle*. It is something of an irony that the author of *Germany and the German Emperor* should have written to his newspaper within the last week saying " Meantime let St. Helena be prepared for the German Emperor."

A.M.

INTRODUCTION

THE new German Empire is the most perplexing quantity in the modern world, and as unavoidable as perplexing. Those affections which grow up indeliberately in the blood may draw us toward the quicker Celt, Latin, or Slav. But the Teuton giant will not be ignored, and offers a bold face to strangers even when he is visibly torn and tormented by a conflict of radical forces. What lies behind that appearance of supermanly strength, that steel-clad majesty—an indomitable will, or a gambler's fears? What is the Secret of this Man in the Iron Mask? What is the *nexus* between Kaiser and conscript, Junker and Social Democrat, between the smiling South and the overbearing bulk of Prussia, between the Pole clinging desperately to his language and his fields, and the skilled workman of Essen, between Lutheran and Catholic, between the old ruins of the Rhineland and the fleets that Hamburg and Bremen send out to the ends of the earth? How reconcile the noble heritage of German poetry and philosophy with the spirit of its latter-day possessors, Goethe with Bismarck? Some aim must underly the herculean efforts of the last forty-one years. What is it? What is to be the end of this rivalry in trade and arms which turns every momentary anxiety into an acute panic? What is the truth about William II? What does Germany mean for the rest of the world?

Perhaps, as the years pass, all propositions grow more

complex and dubious to the serious observer. One problem is solved only to reveal another. Pious phrases are less easily accepted, attested facts more highly valued. The writer confesses that, starting out with no desire keener than to serve international amity, he has grown increasingly conscious that this path must be paved with more substantial material than good intentions. To give goodwill an enduring content there must be real understanding; and for any understanding of the German Empire the student must be content to travel far afield, and to dig deep below the surface of newspaper "news." The following pages attempt an interpretation of the German life of to-day by the aid of the Germanic past; and they attempt to place the most important aspects of this life and this past in true perspective. Such an essay can only be partially successful. Yet the method may be right, however faulty the execution; and the attempt may be useful until better guides appear.

In the controversial portions of the subject, there is, no doubt, a risk in speaking what seems to be plain truth. *Honi soit qui mal y pense.* It is to German thinkers we owe the belief that the risk of mere politeness is greater, as it is also to German thinkers, above all, that we owe the evolutionary method in historical study, the emphasis on geographical and economic factors, and the thought that, in some dark cave deep set in the mountain of facts, the indomitable seeker may surprise the good fairy of the story—the *Volksgeist*, the spirit of the people.

CONTENTS

	PAGE
INTRODUCTION	v
CHAPTER I	
THE FOUR REGIONS	i
CHAPTER II	
THE LEGACY OF FEUDALISM	13
CHAPTER III	
THE LEGACY OF WAR	39
i. Renaissance and Reformation	39
ii. The City Leagues	47
iii. Luther and the Princes	53
iv. The Thirty Years' War	59
✓ v. The Rise of Prussia	68
vi. The Napoleonic Deluge	78
CHAPTER IV	
A TRAGIC CYCLE OF GERMAN GENIUS	94
i. Philosophy, from Kant to Nietzsche	94
ii. Literature, from Lessing to Hauptmann	115
iii. Music, from Handel to Wagner	143
CHAPTER V	
UP FROM THE DEPTHS	156
i. Metternich	156
ii. <u>The Failures of 'Forty-Eight</u> (f)	160
iii. The Free Trade Basis of Modern Germany	in

CHAPTER VI^c

THE BISMARCKIAN TRANSFORMATION	197
I. Retrospect.—The Junker's Problem	197
II. The Weapon is Forged	205
III. The Weapon is Tested	221
IV. The Supreme Stroke.	234
V. The Spirit of Sedan	255

CHAPTER VII

THE NEMESIS OF FORCE	272
I. Conquered Borderlands	272
II. The Unconquered Church.	285
III. The Red Pen.	302
IV. The Two Alliances	326

CHAPTER VIII

WILLIAM II. BY RIGHT DIVINE	341
I. Frederick, a Tragedy in Three Acts	341
II. Hohenzollern Ideals	361

CHAPTER IX

WELT-POLITIK	398
I. England and the Alliances	398
II. The Emperor and the Boer War	403
III. The Bagdad Railway	417
IV. Commercial and Naval Rivalry	423
V. King Edward.—"Encirclement"	434

CHAPTER X

THE ECONOMIC REVOLUTION OF TO-DAY	449
I. The People at Work	449
II. The Tariff and the Trusts	460

CHAPTER XI

THE POLITICAL REVOLUTION OF TO-MORROW	476
I. The Junker State	476
II. The Gathering Storm	484
III. The Verdict of the Empire	496
IV. "The Next War"	505

CHAPTER I

THE FOUR REGIONS

A GOOD map is the beginning of political wisdom. Nothing is so eloquent for him who has ears to hear the story it can tell. For man is never liberated from the influence of soil and sea ; as much as aforesaid, he depends upon the land in which the lot of his life is cast, though an elaborate civilization may hide the earthy roots of all social activity ; and, if peoples and societies differ, it is, directly and indirectly, because the parts of the globe that have bred them differ. Plato, the idealist, said : " Not the country owns the people, but the people the country." The reverse is the greater truth ; though, of course, there is a constant reaction. Thus a good map recreates on a higher plane the idea of predestination. Without denying the reality of the human will, it presents a constant reminder of the efficacy of many-sided environment in the moulding of human destinies. Its lessons are not obscured by the insurgence of romantic personalities, so unimportant in the whole picture of history. It deals only with powerful and relatively permanent factors, in face of which hero-worship is an idle vanity, and the conception of " race " is a figment, an excuse for real explanations. So compelling are its indications, we feel that things could not have been otherwise ; that, if we had been in

A's or B's place, we would have been what A or B is ; that all mankind is submitted to this regimen of circumstance ; and that, as the struggle falls to all, so to all reason utters the command of mutual understanding. Give me—a modern geographer might say—an atlas, and I will tell you what the German people and their rulers are, how they became such and could not become other, how, with new influences and combinations of influences (for land and sea change, though more slowly than man), they must become other than they now are.

But a map is still a hieroglyph, and must be interpreted. Let us, then, imagine that, standing on the Cathedral Terrace at Basel, and turning our backs on the Swiss Alps, we can see for five hundred miles northward to the Danish frontier, and even for eight hundred miles north-eastward to Königsberg, the capital of East Prussia. The land spread out before us would make three parts of a rough square (centring in Dresden), the south-eastern quarter of which is Austrian or Russian territory, most prominently the Kingdom of Bohemia, cut out of the German mass by a triple mountain barrier. To the west of this, the southern third of the Empire is Highland, extending from our feet below Basel to the Hartz Mountains. The two remaining blocks constitute the wide expanse of the North German Plain, with Berlin at its centre. The whole area shelves down from the Alps to the Baltic and North Sea ; and this shelving gives a comparative evenness of climate, the effect of altitude balancing that of southerly latitude. Thus, Munich and Königsberg, nearly six hundred miles apart, register about the same summer temperatures ; there is, however, a wider range of heat and cold, and a shorter summer, in the eastern half of the Northern

Plain, which approximates to Russian conditions, than in the western, which is damper and more resembles Holland.

Climate forms, in fact, one of the few natural factors of union in modern Germany. It gives a temperate variety. "We are favourably screened," says Professor Kirchhoff,¹ "from the hot parching African summers of the Mediterranean regions by the highlands of our south; from excessive precipitation, such as falls to the share of Western Britain, by long distance from the Atlantic, the source of European rains; and yet we are near enough to the coast to escape the droughts of South-Eastern Europe. Thus Central Europe unrolls before our eye the great variety characteristic of Europe in its landscapes no less than in its economic life: verdant mountains and valleys, plains of sapid pasture, fields of abundant fertility, or, at least, sufficiently productive to reward the husbandman's toil, and extensive forests of deciduous and coniferous trees. In yield of corn and of cattle it is in our quarter of the globe, surpassed only by Russia, in consequence of her larger area; in the abundance of wine and fruit it approximates to France and the sunny south. In industrial activity it is now surpassed by England alone, having learned to exploit the enormous masses of raw materials in metals, coal, and salt; its coast line, with excellent harbours, especially those of the German Ocean, which are free from ice the whole year round, secures uninterrupted communication with the trade of the whole world."

¹ In his suggestive *Mensch und Erde*. I quote from Mr. Sonnenschein's translation *Man and Earth: The reciprocal relations and influences of man and his environment*. London: Routledge.

4. GERMANY AND THE EMPEROR

This evenness of climate, which saves Germany from the acute contrasts that are the curse of Russia, and is even more marked than that of France, does not, however, extinguish considerable differences and divisions. Local particularism is often treated as though it were a mysterious vice of the German mind, whereas it is a natural product of geographical and historical circumstance. We have spoken of the Highland and Lowland blocks as units; but this is only a first distinction. Highlands are the last territories to become socially unified; and, under stress of modern industrial conditions, the variety of their mineral and other resources tends even to create new divergences, though less obstinate than those of old. These may be resolved, for our immediate purpose, into a four-fold division.

I. Here, in the south-east corner of the Empire, is Bavaria, its second largest State, still economically, though not politically, connected with Austria as closely as with its western and northern allies. The greater part of it (with Munich, Augsburg, and Regensburg as chief cities) falls within a triangle bounded by the German Jura, the Bohemian Forest range, and the Tyrolese Alps. This is the plateau of the Upper Danube; and its renown goes back to the days when Prussia was a heathen waste, and the wealth of Byzantium and Italy passed this way into the settled and civilized Rhineland. Bavaria, traditionally opposed to the central power of the old Empire, but drawn to Upper Austria by ties of religion and blood, was only reluctantly brought to bow to the politico-economic forces of the nineteenth century. The eastward and westward communications are yet of great importance; and in Munich, modern as it is,—the third city of the Empire, proud of its music, its art treasures,

its civic activities, its surrounding wealth of cattle, forest produce, mining and metal industries, wheatfields, hop gardens, and vineyards—Berlin can but seem a distantly related parvenu. Bavaria north of the triangle, or Franconia, (with ancient episcopal Würzburg, and Nuremberg of mediæval splendour, in the Main-Regnitz Valley), belongs rather to Central Germany.

Passing westward, we find very similar sub-Alpine agricultural conditions in the smaller, but still considerable, kingdom of Württemberg (with Ulm on the Danube, to the south of the Swabian Jura, and Stuttgart, the capital, beyond them). It almost completely encloses the Prussian territory of Hohenzollern, to which the present royal and imperial house trace their origin, and where their first family castle was built long before the first Norman keep had been set up in England.

2. To the north of these lies a group of central highland States, stretching with breaks to where the Hartz Mountains fall from the height of the Brocken steeply to the Northern Plain. These are in some ways the most characteristically and steadfastly German of all, just because of their highland formation and central position—removed alike from the turmoil of the southern, western, and eastern frontiers, and from the international influences of the great Rhineland highway. The chief and only considerable State of the group is the modern kingdom of Saxony, the third largest State in the Empire. The ancient Saxony, which helped to conquer England, lay to the north-west, covering most of modern Holland, Hanover, and Westphalia; a part of this, the Duchy of Brunswick, gave England a royal dynasty. The present Saxon kingdom was colonized in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, its mineral wealth

being a potent attraction. It is thickly populated and preponderantly industrial, textiles, coal mining, and metal-working being the most important occupations; but Leipzig and Dresden are as celebrated for their literary, musical, and artistic activities, as Chemnitz for its cottons or Meissen for its china. This is the region of mountain barriers. The Fichtel-gebirge at the south-west corner of Saxony are notable and curious, forming the axis of a four-spoked wheel—the Thüringerwald, rich in copper, running north-east, the wild scenery of the Erz-gebirge sharply dividing Saxony from Bohemia, the Böhmerwald flanking Bavaria, and the German Jura running south-west into what was once Imperial Swabia. West of Saxony lie the Thuringian States¹—a congeries of tiny principalities, each broken into fragments, and enjoying now only a small measure of their olden feudal dignity. Here, in the heart of Germany, lies Weimar, famous as the home of Goethe, Schiller, Wieland, and Herder. West of these States again, the Hessian Highlands maintain a sturdy peasantry; the rest of the Grand Duchy of Hesse is rather to be counted with the Rhineland.

3. Ignoring the latter for the moment, and pursuing our northward way, we reach the strangely contrasting expanse of the Great Plain, from the Dutch to the Russian borders (both purely political), and so including Hanover, Oldenburg, Schleswig-Holstein, Brunswick, Nassau, the Saxon Province, Mecklenburg, Brandenburg, Pomerania, Posen and Silesia, West and East Prussia, with the city republics of Bremen, Hamburg, and Lübeck. Most of

¹ To be precise—Saxe-Weimar-Eisenach; Saxe-Coburg-Gotha; Saxe-Meiningen; Saxe-Altenburg; Schwartzburg-Rudolstadt; Schwartzburg-Sondershausen; Reuss Older Line; Reuss Younger Line.

these are now embraced in the Kingdom of Prussia, the largest division of the Empire, containing nearly two-thirds of its area and population. The great towns of the area have grown either on the lines of central communication, or on the sea-coast. In the former case, there are few which are not served both by rail and water. Thus, Hanover, the erstwhile Guelf capital, lately quaint, sleepy, particularistic, now most respectably modernised, is the junction of lines for Holland, Hamburg, and Berlin, and is also connected by a tributary of the Weser with Bremen. Berlin is the focus of railways from all parts of the Continent, and has water carriage, by the Spree, the Havel, and their canals, east and west to the Oder and the Elbe, and so to Stettin and Hamburg. The rise of its manufactures of machinery, clothing, and articles of art and luxury, is in no small degree due to this web of transit facilities. Halle-on-Saale, a university town, with mining, weaving, and brewing industries, is also an important railway junction. Magdeburg, the great beet-sugar market, in like position, lies near the junction of the Saale and Elbe. Breslau, the capital of Silesia, and focus of its coal and zinc mining industries, is at a railway cross-roads, and upon the upper Oder. Frankfurt-on-Oder, a large agricultural centre, is linked with Berlin by the Frederick William Canal. Posen, Bromberg, and Thorn benefit not only by the land traffic with Poland, but by the cargoes of timber and agricultural produce that come down the Vistula and Warthe. Germany in general, and Prussia in particular, owe much of their wealth and unity to the possession of the best part of great river systems arising in Russia, Austria, and Switzerland; and great pains have been taken to improve this natural advantage.

No less important is the magnificent chain of sea-ports. Of these the newest and most westerly, Emden, at the mouth of the Ems, Wilhelmshaven, the naval base, Bremen and Bremerhaven on the Weser, Hamburg, chief of all, on the Elbe, and Cuxhaven at its mouth, face the North Sea. Lübeck—the Venice of the mediæval north—Stettin, Dantzig, Königsberg, and Memel, on the Baltic, occupy a freer position, at least from the naval point of view, since the construction of the Kiel Sea Canal, but are troubled by ice in the winter months. The Northern Plain is the chief seat of German agriculture, rye, oats, barley, potatoes, and sugar-beet being extensively grown. Cattle and pigs are reared in large numbers; and about a fifth of the plain is covered with forests, many of them of Scotch pine and beech. Its minerals lie mainly on the highland borders; a bed of ~~potash~~ potash salts, near Magdeburg, the only one in the world, has become the base of important chemical manufactures. Much of the plain is sandy and marshy; even had it easily defensible frontiers, only a hardy and energetic race could have fixed itself here. Talleyrand may have had this in mind when he said that the constitution of Prussia made for it a sort of necessity of ambition.

4. These three so clearly-marked regions are in large measure united by the fourth—that of the Rhenish provinces, to which nature, history, and modern industrialism have combined to give a special character and an ever-growing influence. All through history, since the twelfth century, the Rhine Valley has been one of the great highways, perhaps the greatest, of Western Europe. Always essentially "the German Rhine," in old times it led from the rich and lazy South to the rich and busy marts of the Low Countries, finally pointing to London.

To-day it carries out the produce of one of the wealthiest industrial regions in the world. From Lake Constance, round the sharp bend at Basel, through the long rift valley between the pine-clad granite hills of the Vosges and the Schwarzwald (Black Forest), and down to Mannheim, the river is not commercially navigable; even beyond, very powerful steamers of light-draught are needed. Railways, however, pursue along both banks the course of roads which are among the most ancient in Europe. This region of the upper river consists of the Grand Duchy of Baden, on the right bank, the "Reichsland," or Imperial territory, of Alsace-Lorraine, and the Palatinate (an administrative district of Bavaria), on the left. It is very fertile and well-cultivated. About a third of the inhabitants of Baden depend on agriculture; but there are many industries (silk ribbons, hats, leather, paper, clocks, etc.). After Mannheim, which is a considerable port and railway centre, the chief towns, all small, are Karlsruhe, Freiburg, and Heidelberg, the last two with universities. The conquered provinces westward are much more definitely industrial, having mining interests inferior only to those of Prussia and Saxony, the most important cotton manufacture in the Empire (with Mülhausen = mill-houses, for its weaving centre), and a considerable production of woollens. Small farming maintains about a third of the population; and there are many vineyards. The ancient cathedral and university city, Strassburg, stands at the junction of the Rhine-Rhone and Rhine-Marne canals. Alsace and Lorraine have, of course, given special anxiety to the German army; and Strassburg, the capital, and Metz (for a thousand years a centre of romance language and civilization) are strong for-

tresses. The considerable French element in the population may reflect complacently upon the pacific conquest over their conquerors which the bringing of their great industries within the German tariff wall has given them.

Crossing Hesse-Darmstadt, the Rhine reaches a more open region, often called the Garden of Germany, and at Mainz, a little west of Frankfurt, receives the waters of the Main. Frankfurt, a fine city of half a million people, is the banking and commercial capital of south-central Germany, and has large chemical and dye works. Mainz is an entrepot and head of the Rhine passenger services. Wiesbaden, amid the mineral springs of the Taunus, is a fashionable health resort. At Bingen the river enters another gorge, dividing the Rhenish Tableland, which extends hence northward to near Cologne, with a breadth of a hundred miles—the greater part of Westphalia and Rhenish Prussia. This is the tourist's Rhine; but neither the romance of its famous ruins, steep-roofed villages, and terraced vineyards, nor the brazen appeal of modern militarism, as illustrated in the national monument on the Niederwald and the huge arch of granite raised to Kaiser Wilhelm I, which, from the mouth of the Moselle, shuts out the beauty of Coblenz, can avail against the insidious, universal growth of machine industry, marked by pillars of smoke from train, steamer, and factory. Toward the aristocratic university town of Bonn, the river valley is again contracted, between the volcanic plateau of the Eifel on the left, and the Westerwald and Sieben Gebirge (Seven Mountains) on the right. Cologne is just beyond, rich alike in the traditions that cling about its magnificent cathedral, its modern manufactures and docks, and its position at the junction

of the greatest West European river with the trunk railways from France and Belgium to Berlin and Russia, and from Holland to Switzerland and Austria. Aachen (Aix-la-Chapelle), Charlemagne's capital and tomb, lies forty miles west, at the meeting of the German, Belgian, and Dutch frontiers.

Finally, we reach, on the slope of the plateau falling toward the Netherlands, the great North Rhenish coal-field, a part of the formation which extends right across from the Belgian Ardennes into Saxony and Silesia. This is the Lancashire of modern Germany, its richest and most densely populated region. Within an area of fifty square miles north of Cologne stand Düsseldorf, on the Rhine; Solingen, famous for swords; the joint textile city of Elberfeld-Barmen; Duisburg and Ruhrort, at the confluence of the Rhine and Ruhr; Crefeld, the largest German silk centre; Essen, where Krupp's steel-works consume over four thousand tons of coal a day; Bochum and Dortmund (mining and smelting). These, Mülheim, Gelsenkirchen, and many smaller centres are united by a network of railways; the river ports, rivalling the greatest of sea-ports, bring in ores and other raw material, and help powerfully to distribute the manufactured products. Except in some side valleys, and away eastward toward Münster, the old Catholic university town where the Peace of Westphalia was signed, closing the horrors of the Thirty Years' War, the quiet life of the country village has been destroyed. Amid these blazing furnaces, in the clatter of the textile factory, before the blank, serried heights of workmen's dwellings, where is the Germany of Gretchen and Werther; what, even, is the fame of Bismarck and Moltke beside that of Krupp, Ehrhardt, Ballin, and Thyssen?

This rapid survey of the four regions exhibits something of the extreme diversity of modern Germany, its contrasts of old and new, of mountain and plain, of manufacture and agriculture, Catholic and Protestant, civil and military, scientific and feudal, of Pole and Swabian, Bavarian and Brandenburger. We have named fifty-eight towns of some importance, differing greatly in their characteristics, and all differing, again, from the neighbouring countrysides. Is the political unity of the Empire, then, purely mechanical?

To answer this question, before we attempt a closer consideration of some aspects of contemporary German life, we must recall the chief elements in the historical heritage to which both diversity and unity are due. This will carry us through a series of maps quite other than that we have been using, with perpetually shifting frontiers; with different inner divisions, at first shadowy, then crystallizing into the feudal settlement, later forming and reforming under modern influences; with the axis of Teutonic society lying now north and south, then west and east, and again north and south, as Rome, Paris, Vienna, and Berlin, become successively the centres of greatest pressure. It is a story full of romance still strange to English readers, less known than that of Greece or Rome, of which we actually learned more at school, and yet not less full of rich meaning, and, perhaps, more important to the education of any who wish to be worthy citizens of the living world.

CHAPTER II

THE LEGACY OF FEUDALISM

CONTINENTAL Europe consists of two Mediterranean coasts—the northern, or Baltic, broader than the southern, much less rich, but little less various—a central mountain region (culminating in the Alps), a western coast, and an eastern plain (Russia). Naturally, the first cradle of civilization lay in the favoured Levant and the neighbouring peninsulas. The progress of growth was directed westward, and conditioned throughout by successive Asiatic invasions, which destroyed one after another the great States of the ancient world, and left to modern times a host of yet unsolved problems. Teutons trod upon the heels of Celts, Slavs upon the heels of Teutons, either passing through the central Alpine block, or following the pasturage around it to the Baltic, and then turning south-westward for the loot of Rome. The further west and south they got, the further they were from the sources of disturbance—for there were other swarms still to come, Northmen, Huns, Mongols, Turks, and Saracens—the nearer, also, to the new opportunities which arose, when, in the fourteenth century, ships once more dared out upon the Atlantic. The rich soil of the eastern plain was foredoomed to invasion, and hence to tyranny; the grossest secular tyranny extant, and the most strongly organized spiritual tyranny flourish there, in fact, to this day. The central

mountains gave their shepherds and hunters the opportunity as well as the spirit of self-defence; and there liberty waxed earliest. The northern plain was in less evil plight than the eastern, being more various and more temperate, and having a sea-coast of its own. But a glance at the map suggests how seriously Germany was destined to suffer from its disadvantages, as compared with France, Scandinavia, Britain, and Spain, in having no natural frontiers except in the south; while it had sufficient internal barriers to create deep differences of character and interest. Patriotic German historians like to take all people of related blood into their programme. The pathetic facts are that there never was any clear-cut Fatherland; that till the Customs Union was established there never was any overwhelming demand for German unity; and that when it was accomplished large German populations were necessarily left outside.

Not only were there no natural frontiers, save one; that one interrupted the only great stream of civilizing influence, while from the other points of the compass new heathen swarms were ever invited. The Teutons, though they had gained much of southern lore from the more advanced Celts, contrasted extraordinarily with far earlier southern peoples in having neither literature, arts (except the simplest), sciences, nor philosophies. The western tribes became gradually Latinised. Not so their eastern relations. All round West and South Germany, Rome left traces still to be found in a semicircle of cities—Augsburg, Regensburg, Basel, Mainz, Treves, Strassburg, Speyer, Worms, Cologne, and Aix-la-Chapelle—most of which have had a continuous ecclesiastical history. But, from the days when this was the great Imperial recruiting ground of mercenaries, used to crush

their own brethren,¹ to those of the modern Kultur-kampf, Rome has been rather a disintegrating than a constructive influence. No good German regrets that the Roman orbit never effectively extended beyond the Rhine and the Danube; and the Hermann (Arminius) who overwhelmed the legions of Varus in the Teutoburger Forest (A.D. 9), breaking for ever the threat of such extension, is still counted an early national hero, "the saviour of German nationality and German history." Yet an infection of Roman ambition, without Roman responsibility and experience, was for centuries to plague Central Europe; and even to-day it may be said that what Germany most needs is less of this low ambition and more of the spirit of secular Rome in its ripest age. Be that as it may, the history of Germany is largely that of the movement of the centre of gravity away from the Roman, or south-western, toward the Bo-Russian, or north-eastern borders.

Of the Teutonic tribes after the first great migrations, there may be distinguished the Franks in the west; Saxons, Frisians, and Thuringians in the north; Goths in the east (coming from Sweden); and Suevi, or Alemanni (that is, Swabians and Burgundians) in the south. Ignoring many lesser units, it is important to realize the positions, when settled, of five great national groups upon which much of German history rests:—

The Franks, occupying the present Netherlands and North Rhineland (Salic Franks by the sea, Ripuarians inland).

¹ Note, however, Professor Heyck (*Helmolt's History*, vol. VI, p. 38):—"Had it not been for the political and general education gained by the young Teutons in the Roman service, there would have been no German Liberator." This volume is valuable for its full treatment of early Teutonic history.

The Saxons, occupying the Westphalian and Hanoverian portions of the present Prussia.

Franconia, occupied by several small nations, and covering the present Thuringian States, Hesse, and the present Kingdom of Saxony.

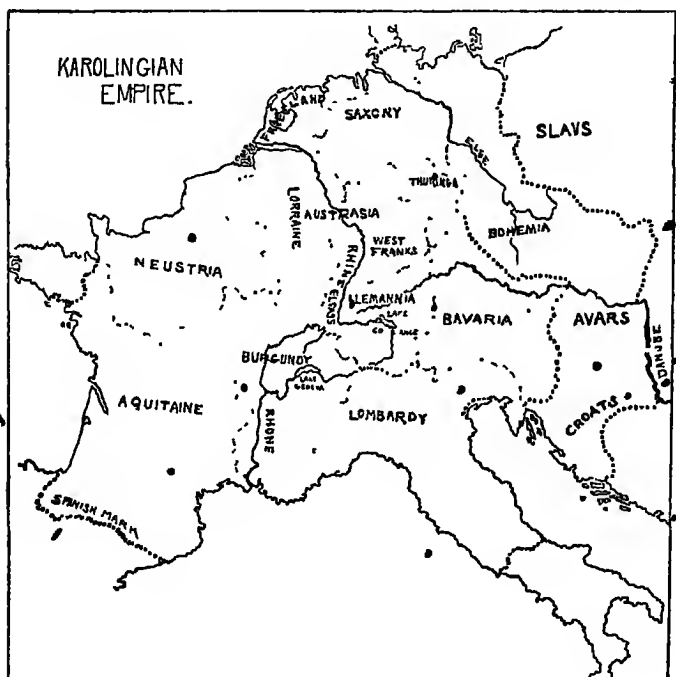
Swabia, the present Württemberg, South Baden, Alsace, and Northern, or German, Switzerland.

The Bavarians, driven out of Bohemia by advancing Slavs, and settled in the present Austria and Bavaria.

High and low German alike seem to have possessed a strong sense of freedom, dignity, honour, and equality. The economic basis was the farmstead, usually gathered in an enclosed village, with its crops of oats, wheat, barley, and millet tilled by bondmen, its herds of cattle and swine, its household industries, and its rudimentary trade in skins, furs, horns, and smoked meats. The social basis was the "kindred," with its communal and individual property, the union of kindreds or "folk," which was practically an army, and loose federations of these "folks." It was only in war that leaders were readily obeyed; hence a perpetual rivalry for the position which the Romans named "dux" (duke, leader). "Liberty, that lovely thing," says Montesquieu, "was discovered in the wild forests of Germany."¹ Ages of wandering had given an excessive value to physical strength

¹ Speaking of the tribal federations—and the same thing might be said of the diet of the Mediæval Empire—Menzel writes, in his *History of Germany*: "The only points of union in these federative States, in which each of the districts was independent, consisted in the meeting of the representatives in the general State assembly, and in the election of a common leader in time of war. It is not unusual to find many very small tribes completely independent; and even in the great States the small district assemblies were co-existent with the diets."

and martial heroism ; something of these, with the co-operative spirit of their tribal assemblies, to which the western world owes the origins of representative government, survived in the mediæval guilds and chivalric orders. • For “chivalry” was only re-invented in the Middle Ages ; in essence it may be traced back to those



earliest Northerners who invaded Greece, and whose ideal it was, according to Herodotus, “to ride and shoot and tell the truth.” And how true still of all the peoples of Teuton blood is that other shrewd saying of Herodotus : “If only they could unite, they would be irresistible !”

In the oldest recorded times, there was an important economic difference between north and south. In the

latter, the land was held communally, subject to periodic redistribution.¹ Resistance to the introduction of feudal tenures, which destroyed this practice, was a chief cause of trouble to the first German Emperors; and even to-day a large part of Baden consists of communal land—the “allmend,” recalling the “Alemanni,” from which is derived the French “Allemande.” Hospitality, the ideal of “home,” and respect for women were among the ancient Teuton virtues that have not withered. The dignity of the hausfrau, the mother of many hardily-reared children, would seem, however, to have involved her virtual exclusion from the public sphere. The killing-off of males in centuries of warfare has emphasised this tendency; and who can count the loss to Germany of the comparative lack of those feminine influences in the State which have been so rich for good or ill in England, France, and Italy? It is clear that a certain surplus and simplicity of sentiment in the Teuton character has a no less venerable source. When we shake hands we still use the far-away customary method of showing a loyal cordiality. No mythology is richer; it deeply impregnated popular Christianity for centuries.² And Menzel cites as an evidence of the poetical instinct of the German

¹ The geographic factors which produced these differences in the economic organizations of the southern and northern tribes of Germany are dealt with comprehensively by Henri de Tourville in his *Histoire de la Formation Particulariste*. Paris. 1905.

² As the festival of the darkest nights of the year, when Wodin and the lesser gods visited the earth, was taken over into the celebration of Christmas, with mistletoe representing the old worship in the sacred grove. The Christmas tree is thus a sort of cousin of the “tree of liberty,” round which the villagers danced.

peoples throughout the centuries such assonances, still used in legal jargon, as *bank und bett* (bed and board), *frank und frei* (frank and free), *haus und hof* (house and land), *herz und hand* (heart and hand), *los und ledig* (free and single), *rath und that* (word and deed), *richten und schlichten* (to judge and adjust), *weg und steg* (highway and byway), and many more. The oldest Teutonic tales are redolent of an heroic romanticism; nobility, courtesy, adventurousness, hospitality are the great virtues they exhibit. For centuries after Tacitus wrote, no national tie or general characteristic is discernible in the many tribes of "Germania" more real than this common abundance of poetic sentiment. We shall see that it reaches rare heights of expression, and sinks to ignoble depths, as the fortunes of the people wax and wane; but it remains the most patent strain in their character. Its manifestations vary, in the soft and subtle Austrian, the independent Saxon, the easy-going Bavarian, the vivacious Rhinelander, the grim Prussian. It falls sometimes into opposite extremes—of mysticism and realism, amiability and arrogance. But it always clearly distinguishes the Germanic from the Latin peoples on the one hand, and the Slavs on the other. Perhaps, in a psychological synthesis which I will not attempt, the more modern trait of obedience and discipline would be found to be a natural complement, the other side of a rich sentimentality.

From the destruction of Rome in 410 to the discovery of gunpowder and printing, and the beginning of transoceanic discovery, in the fifteenth century, there was a double problem before any who could be called statesmen in times so cruelly troubled—that of creating a new

system of internal order, and a new system of external defence. Order cannot survive without defence; defence is useless without order. The World-State that had given both was only a memory. New conditions had arisen. The possibility of a future Germany had arisen. Defence was the easier side of the problem. It involved ultimately a reaction of colonization on the Baltic and Slavonic borders; but, in the first place, and essentially, it meant cavalry—because the invaders were generally mounted, and because their immense numbers and wide extent made quick movement necessary. Order was the harder task, and occupied many centuries, because rulers who wanted obedient subjects were far from wishing to obey reason themselves. Order meant, first, the reduction of anarchy by the permanent settlement of tribes hitherto nomadic; then the discovery of means of maintaining a growing population by improved agriculture and trade; and, at length, the discovery of a new social tie, an idea capable, in some degree, of uniting conqueror and conquered, noble and serf, people and people—in a word, a religion. The situation demanded, in short, an administrative system, a military system, an agrarian system, and a religious system. Not that it was realized in this way by any of those burly barbarians or clerical dreamers who aspired to build a new Roman Empire in the northern marches. These are the logical elements of the thousand years' struggle; they point us to its chief actors—the King or Emperor, his Court and his rivals; the remaining nobles, large and small, divided by race and greed; the Roman Church, the real heir of the Cæsars, and its officers; and the voiceless mass of common folk, of most diverse blood, partially Latinized in the south-west, heathen in the north, freemen (a

diminishing number), serfs, and slaves.¹ Two great institutions arose from this play of forces, the Papacy and Feudalism—the latter as distinct, strong, and stable a system, for a time, as the Imperialism of the old world or the Industrialism of to-day—with a curious ethical tie (as marked as the paternalism of Rome or the humanism of to-day) called chivalry. The feudal system spread throughout Central and West Europe, was stamped upon Britain by the Normans, and carried into the Levant by the Crusaders. But it lasted longest and has left the largest mark in the lands now called German; and it is only there that it concerns us.

The development of petty Courts out of the free companions of the old elective tribal chiefs had already gone far under the influence of Roman traditions in the north-west, when the Frankish confederation calling itself after a mythical sea-king, Merovæus, found its opportunity in the imperial eclipse, and descended from the north Rhineland into Gaul, then upon the lands of the Alemanni (496), and Thuringians (531), and upon Aquitaine (507-511), Burgundy and Provence (532-6). The process was violently modified by the Salic Frank, or as we should now say, the Belgian, Chlodwig (481-511), whose Christianity, theatrically embraced upon the battlefield, was something less than skin-deep, but, being given the Catholic, not the Arian, turn, secured

¹ Nitzsch, in his *Geschichte des deutschen Volkes bis zum Augsburger Religions-frieden*—a remarkable pioneering work of economic history—holds that in the fifth century the free hunters and warriors known to Tacitus began to abandon to a class of special fangulues the use of arms and the business of government, and that serfdom arose as soon as the pastoral stage gave place to a settled agriculture, the land economy (*naturwirtschaft*) continuing thenceforward undisturbed till the end of the twelfth century.

him, as compared with other German chieftains, the favour of the Latinized populations and the Bishop of Rome. Although the Frankish rule was becoming a real dominion, tribal traditions lay heavy upon it; and what had been a source of strength, the lack of a regular monarchical succession, revealed itself now as a grave weakness. The peculiarities of early German inheritance are of prime importance in any attempt to explain what followed. The equal rights of sons of a royal or noble family produced, as in England, rival claims and feuds which were rarely extinguished except in blood. Chlodwig applied the normal remedy wholesale, exterminating the Frankish "kuninges," or noble families, and establishing in their place a new aristocracy of service, at the head of which arose the "Mayor of the Palace," as overseer of the royal offices and estates. This first step in feudalism, though it turned the Franks, as compared, for instance, with the Goths of Spain, or the Saxons of the North, with their stout tribal nobility, into an undisciplined horde, did meet the essential need of central unity in an expanding kingdom, where distance alone made government by popular assemblies more and more difficult. The human stuff, however, the self-sacrifice of Irish missionaries notwithstanding, was too crude and diverse. The time was not yet ripe for a civil service, or for so wide a Franco-German combination. Among the larger dependent peoples, especially in the east, the counts and dukes could not be rooted out. Administrative duties had to be committed to them. The increase of their power and wealth could not be prevented. At the centre, too, the Mayors of the Palace obtained a hereditary status, and, like the Turkish servants of the Moslem Caliphs and the Shoguns of

Japan, seized the control of the State ; till, in 687, one of them added the forms to the substance of royalty, and founded the East Frankish Carolingian dynasty. Thus, in less than two centuries, the vicious circle, so full of treachery and bloodshed, was completed.

In northern Gaul and central Germany, the Franks were settlers as well as conquerors ; but while they were at home in the latter, in the former they were only the rulers of a Celtic-Roman population, whose speech they adopted, and with whom they slowly fused. In southern Gaul they were still weaker ; and in Bavaria they were met by well-established native princes. While north and south were thus divided, the two halves of the north, *Austrasia*,¹ the more aristocratic, and *Neustria*, the more centralized, the future Germany and France in embryo, showed a perpetual tendency to fall apart. The second great combination of the whole was effected in the latter part of the eighth century. A new reason for concentration had appeared. The question now was whether Islam—which, between 622 and 714, had poured torrent-like from Arabia, over Persia, Northern India, Asia Minor, Northern Africa to the ocean, and Spain, and held the South of France till 755—was to conquer central Europe also. Charles Martel, who gave the negative answer at the Battle of Tours (732), which was to be confirmed in the next ten years, was content with the title

¹ *I.e.*, the East Frank territory. Not to be confused with the Ostmark-Austria. The latter was at first only a province, the Eastern March ; afterwards "*Österreich*," the Eastern realm. The march, or frontier district, was under a count, *graf* (margrave), as, later, the fortified town, *búrg*, was under a burgrave. Excellent maps showing the developments of this period will be found in Droysen's *Allgemeiner Historischer Hand-Atlas*, or Putzger's *Historischer Schul-Atlas*.

GERMANY AND THE EMPEROR

"Duke." Not so his son, Pippin the Short, who assumed the title of King of the Franks (751) by a bargain with the Pope, which was paid by a recovery of lands from the Lombards—the future Papal States, the basis of the Temporal Power.

Pippin's son, Charles the Great, the most imposing secular figure of the Middle Ages, extended this momentous precedent of a German protectorate over the Papacy, and, in a long reign (768–814), reached far up toward the lost level of classic civilization. A rare personality, he is said to have stood seven feet high, was an adept with the heavy iron lance, and an unmatched swimmer; married five times, and had five concubines; learned rhetoric and astronomy from Alcuin of York, mastered Latin and some Greek, collected songs, projected a German grammar, sat up o' nights trying to learn to write, and patronized church music and decoration; began a canal to join the Rhine and Danube; made distant alliances, and begged an elephant from his friend Haroun-al-Raschid; was a soldier as resourceful as resolute, a road-builder, model farmer, founder of schools and markets, champion of justice, friend of the poor, and, in intervals, a Christian dreamer. He is said to have fought over thirty campaigns in forty-five years. Far and wide went his royal messengers (model, long afterwards, for the English system of Circuit judges), hearing, in the assembly of a county or group of counties, the report of the counts upon their administration of office, for reference to the King. One of Charles's Counts, husband of his wife's sister, Tassilo of Zollern (Bavaria), is the first distinguished ancestor of the present Prussian dynasty. Ruled by one hand from the Atlantic to the Bohemian border, and from the North Sea to the Alps, Europe seemed to be

again in sight of its ideal. When, by what some historians of the Papacy still regard as a bold and happy stroke, Charlemagne received the Imperial Crown—for a thousand years, till Napoleon, the sole Imperial Crown—at the altar of St. Peter's (800), Bavaria had been thoroughly subdued, Lombardy and Rome brought within the Empire, and the obstinately independent but ever disunited Saxons of the North conquered and converted. The suzerainty of Byzantium disappeared. Charles ruled Cæsar's western lands and those of Germany into the bargain, at the time when the first Vikings were ravaging Britain. Real unity, however, must grow from within, from the roots of the common life. The French and German halves of the Empire were deeply different. The former had already been organized, both for secular and religious purposes, on Roman lines. The mass of the population was Celtic; the government was impregnated with Latin ideas. The German peoples, on the other hand, were one only in a forgotten community of blood; they had never been submitted to a wide central rule, and clung to their local laws, customs, and loyalties with an obstinate instinct that their freedom depended upon it. Unlike their English relatives, they were nations before they were united on a larger scale; they were conquered before they were gathered into the Christian Church; and both processes were here powerfully influenced by Rome. The reforms of one reign could do little to break down the isolation and self-sufficiency of these far-spread communities. Two groups of disintegrating influences were gathering.

The Church accepted patronage only to extend its own subtle sway. For three centuries, it had been an elaborately organized institution, wielding worldly weapons

with one arm and ghostly with the other, with revenues ever and rapidly increasing as its missionaries capture the wild imagination of the northern peoples, until at last it came to possess nearly half the land of Europe; with its occasional councils apeing the ancient Roman Senate, a system of local government in its provincial and national councils, and a fixed hierarchy of bishops, priests, and deacons. Amid surrounding ignorance, the Church had a virtual monopoly of learning, even of the art of writing and copying. No authority in the Western world equalled that of the keeper of Peter's Keys, and the threat of excommunication or interdict was well-nigh irresistible. Where a shadow of the ancient municipality survived, bishops stepped without dispute into the magisterial chairs. On the countrysides they became ecclesiastical princes, and rich abbots lorded it over tenants and serfs. Great missionaries, like Willibrord of Ripon, and Winifrid (Boniface), the first archbishop of Mainz, another Englishman (martyred in Frisia, 755), won universal renown. Others, like secular counts and dukes, as luxurious and readier at intrigue, led their own retainers to war; it is said that within thirty years, at the end of the ninth century, two archbishops and eight bishops died on the battlefield.¹ If the Emperor waxed too independent, the Pope went into opposition. If he favoured the lesser nobles, or the new burgher class, as was latterly the case, the clerics conspired with the greater. Sometimes the Church was wiser; occasionally the State was abler. The "Truce of God," a series of ecclesiastical rules, restricting the right of internal warfare, and the system of "Pand-

¹ *Short History of War and Peace*, G. H. Perris, ch. v., and also for the military developments of the time.

peace," by which a province or the whole realm was similarly bound by imperial decree, had a considerable influence in the eleventh and early twelfth centuries. A cynical cleric, and his name was legion, might plausibly regard the whole of the movement of the Crusades (that final abandonment of the anti-militarism of the early Church which gave the Christian faith the appearance of an imitation of Islam) as a vast experiment in the cure of inveterate disorder by blood-letting.

Archbishops like Hatto of Mainz, Bruno and Anno of Cologne, and Adalbert of Bremen, were among the most daring and forceful statesmen of their time. As compared with those of the Latin south, the later-founded ecclesiastical provinces of Germany were of immense extent,¹ so that the leading clerics became princes of vast wealth and territorial power. The Cross was, throughout the north, an instrument of conquest or suzerainty. During the first half of the tenth century, the Hungarians, not yet Christianized, made almost yearly raids into south and central Germany, ravaging the country and slaughtering the people. The last refuges of paganism were not overcome before the middle of the twelfth century; and an immense work of peasant colonization on the Slavic borders had then to be carried through. The foundation of a see at Magdeburg became a prime act of Imperial policy; to march an archbishop into Poland or Hungary was equivalent to marching an imperial army out. Such questions drew the Emperor, especially if he were pious, to the south; thus, under Otto II (973-983), Germany

¹ See chap. vii of Freeman's *Historical Geography*, and Bishop Stubbs' *Germany in the Middle Ages* (2 vols.), the best review of the subject in English.

was virtually ruled from Italy. With alternations of power, there was a like see-saw of moral quality. The Church rose over the divided and harassed Empire only to exhibit in the Papacy of the ninth and tenth centuries the foulest depths of vice. In the worst period of Roman corruption and the strongest of German monarchy, Henry III could depose three rival Popes (1046).

Then there arose out of the monastic brotherhoods a wave of reform. Celibacy of the priesthood was established. The power of electing the Pope was placed in the hands of the cardinals. In 1073 the great Hildebrand (Gregory VII) strode to the Petrine chair without formally, declared the infallibility of Rome and the supremacy of clerical over secular rule, prohibited the lay appointment and endowment of high ecclesiastics, and brought Henry IV to the humiliation of Canossa. Norman William found it no easy task to conquer a distant and insignificant island a tenth as large as the Empire; but the completeness with which the great English Earldoms were wiped out enabled him to establish a direct and universal fealty to the Crown, and so to lay a firm base for a national monarchy, which he fortified by putting into the Church a new body of dependent ecclesiastics, at the same time refusing to do homage to Rome. The Empire was chiefly a tradition, an idea, a pious hope; when the Pope declared war upon it, all the glory of the house of Hohenstauffen was of no avail. Twenty years later the Crusades had begun to put every sword in Europe at the service of the Church and to pour a stream of gold into its coffers.

Parallel with this disintegrating factor ran the economic and military effects of Feudalism, in a constant tendency toward the revival of tribal particularism and the streng-

thening of local aristocratic power. Taking lessons from Goth and Lombard horsemen, and Byzantine castle-builders, Charles the Great had met the onslaughts of Magyars and Northmen by supplementing the old Frankish militia with forces of cavalry, a new commissariat, and lines of fortified posts connected by roads, and by forcing the adoption of armour throughout the Empire. Later rulers bettered the example; and soon the land bristled with feudal castles and walled towns. Under a single strong hand the realm might possibly hold together. But the habit of dividing the royal succession still obtained; and it seemed that the central power had received a fatal blow when, in 843, the heirs of Lewis I split their patrimony between them. The direction of this triple partition, famous as the treaty of Verdun, is of high moment and significance. Lothar, with the title of Emperor, received Italy, Savoy, and what afterwards became Switzerland, Eastern France, and the Netherlands; while the other sons took the territories to the east and west. These last had a certain homogeneity, and developed gradually toward the French and German nationalities. The middle kingdom had no natural unity. Of its two main portions, Burgundy, cut in two by the Swiss Jura, fell mainly to France; Lotlringia broke to pieces, bones of contention which passed from hand to hand. Of the two great rivers, the Rhone and Rhine, which at the outset were only frontier roads, the one soon came into French, the other into German keeping.

From this partition may be dated the beginnings of modern nationalities in Western Europe. But, while Latin traditions helped the development from feudalism to monarchy on the one side, on the other, the Teutonic

tribal spirit, the greater racial variety, and the immanence of danger on the east greatly delayed it. The heritage of the German Karlings was, indeed, aggrandized in the tenth and early eleventh centuries by a series of vigorous Saxon and Franconian rulers—especially Henry I, “the Fowler,” under whom Brandenburg and Schleswig were conquered and “converted” and the Saxon and Austrian “marks,” or border jurisdictions instituted; his son Otto I, “the Great,” who, however, practically merged his function of German King in that of recreator of the “Holy Roman Empire of the German nation”; and Conrad II, who enlisted the smaller nobility against the great dukes. The fundamental sources of discord always remained.

Not that the Empire and the Papacy are to be thought of as formally separate and rival powers. They were both essential to the mediæval mind, which naïvely compared their relationship to that of moon and sun, or body and soul. Both shared the tradition of the majesty of Rome, the special sanction of Christianity, and universal homage. “There was and could be but one Emperor; he was always mentioned with a certain reverence; his name summoned up a host of thoughts and associations which we cannot comprehend or sympathize with. His office, unlike that of modern Emperors, was by its very nature elective and not hereditary; and, so far from resting on conquest or the will of the people, rested on and represented pure legality. War could give him nothing which law had not given him already; the people could delegate no power to him who was their lord and the viceroy of God.”¹

The spirit that fostered and was fostered by this double

¹ Bryce: *Holy Roman Empire*, p. 454.

rule gave Germany a high civilization when England was a barbaric border-land and America was the happy-hunting ground of wandering tribes. It has filled German history with splendours of art and poetry, piety and chivalric manhood. The very looseness of the Imperial bond was the surety of a rich variety of social life, the value of which for posterity we do not even yet fully realize. But, as new needs arose, and the once unquestioned system of mediæval thought was undermined, a new authority became more and more necessary. Resonant titles, brilliant ceremonial, and paper constitutions did not produce a common law, and still less did they free the slave or cure the mediæval scarcity of money.

Feudalism carried within itself evident seeds of decay ; but it met the chief need of the age—it produced a social settlement, a definite code of duties and rewards which took the place of the decaying tribal system, and afforded protection against outside pressure. It supplied some sort of government, which, essentially, is not a system of force, but a system of responsibility. So it grew impersonally, irresistibly. Formally, it grew downward, by the grant of “benefices” by each superior to his inferiors ; in fact, it based itself on the chief economic characteristic of the age, local tillage by serf labour. The lord had the weapons, and owned the land ; farmer and labourer could only pay by service or in kind, as in the main the lord could only pay the King by the services of himself and his retainers. Hence “noble tenures” and “servile tenures,” and the gradual elaboration of a regular hierarchy, in which every one, except the King, must give homage and “aids” to a superior, and every one, except the remaining slaves

(aliens only, after the tenth century) could exact homage from an inferior. One of the lord's privileges was that of selecting a husband for the heir of a fief, another that of "escheat" or "entail," when heirless fiefs fell back to him—both important means to the enlargement of estates and the growth of the hereditary succession. Fiefs became hereditary by law in the first half of the eleventh century, when the highest point of national unity was reached.

The lord's castle and his mailed riders cost heavily. "Karst-Hans"¹ hated priest and courtier as he loved his folk and his beasts. Nevertheless, the population grew and his condition was bettered. Churches, monasteries, and towns readily gave part of their lands in return for the protection of neighbouring nobles or of professional soldiers. When feudal oppression or papal taxation—a heavy burden—were most acutely felt, there was a revulsion towards imperial unity. Generally, the centrifugal movement was the stronger. A direct control by the King over the people or the military forces of the counties was impossible, if only by sheer extent of territory. The fact that Germany was conquered by Germans, not foreigners, was another reason for a comparative respect for old customs, one result being to leave large parts, especially of the north, in enjoyment of various pre-feudal tenures, and subject to their ancient local nobilities. The nearest loyalty is always the strongest, because the most easily enforced; and, if the lord's castle spelled serfdom for many who had been freemen, it did give a certain security in turbulent days. In the general disturbance of the Crusades, many a bondman

¹ "Jack-of-the-Hoe," a pseudonym used by Ulrich von Hutten in a squib in defence of the peasantry.

claimed his liberty. But the blood-letting made room for a new crop of hereditary nobles, some of whom found a real function in arresting the Danes on the Baltic, the Slavs and Magyars, and afterwards the Turks, on the east; while others played the game of the Two Roses, or Montagu and Capulet. Wisdom's an orphan on such a day, and creeps but hardly in at that last hole, "not so deep as a well, nor so wide as a church door, but 'tis enough" for gallant mad Mercutio, with his *passado* and *alla stoccata*, and the flash of sense come too late—"A plague o' both your houses!"

It is the fate of empires to die of Imperialism. When rulers who should have been thinking only of internal union became embroiled with the Lombard cities, Sicily, and Syria, when Conrad II, Frederick Barbarossa, and the sceptical Frederick II went off to the second, third, and sixth Crusades, the Empire of questionable and questioned "holiness" lost its last chance. The entanglements with Italy were disastrous enough in their immediate effects, but more so in the reactions they set up. Directly, they drained away the skill, energy, and material resources necessary to the establishment of a strong national State. This waste was resisted, especially in the north, where the highest degree of independence was maintained. When the Emperor attempted to assert his authority, the lusty Saxons became the special friends of the Papacy. If they were defeated, it was a questionable advantage. The crushing of the revolt of Henry the Lion at the end of the twelfth century, and the sub-division of his immense estates in Saxony and Bavaria did, indeed, bring into existence a new class of lesser nobles owing fealty to the Emperor. It was thus that the first famous ancestors of the Hohenzollerns and Hapsburgs—Frederick,

burggrave of Nuremberg, and Rudolf, of a little county of north Switzerland—came into notice. But the new nobles, with their shrewd marriages and faculty of adding one estate to another, the new cities which grew simultaneously, proved to be no better basis for a strong State than the old duchies. Again, the Rhenish archbishops were moved to support the Emperor by way of strengthening their independence of their nominal master in Rome. Directly, this brought them into conflict with the most German of the Germans, the Saxons; in a longer view it is to the greed of these ecclesiastical princes that the great disruption of the Church itself is largely due. Thus, to the geographical differentiation of north and south is added a political and a religious differentiation—the north being papal when the Papacy is at its height, and yet from motives (including a greater religious earnestness) which later are to make it the citadel of Protestantism; the south clinging to the shows of imperial grandeur, and, when these pass away, to a new combination of their ancient national loyalty with Roman religion, the nearest approach to their former imperial status possible in the world. Saxony and Bavaria, Prussia and Austria—the grounds of the opposition change, but north and south are always different and generally opposed, with the Rhineland a doubtful third quantity more and more inviting the cupidity of France.

The custom of electing the Emperor in a Diet of chief princes, established in place of partition in 887, had continued since the end of the ninth century, a fatal obstacle to the development of a Germanic monarchy. Sometimes, as in the first instance, it was a means of setting aside a legitimate but incapable ruler, sometimes a choice between rival claimants, sometimes a mere endorsement

of the claims of blood and capacity. Better than a divided succession, it was notably inferior, as a means of consolidation, to the rule of primogeniture. Henceforth, however strong the Emperor might be by reason of outside possessions, within the Empire he was but a figurehead of a group of powerful princes who made war and peace for themselves, coined their own money, levied taxes, and administered justice. Family right was only overridden for good reason until the time of the Great Interregnum, so-called (1256-73); but the need of electoral recognition put a constant break on the growth of Imperial power, especially as three-sevenths of the lay sovereignty was wielded by ecclesiastical princes whose first allegiance was to Rome. We shall see in the next chapter that this peculiar feature of the constitution of the Empire, which gave the Church in Germany an aristocratic and alien character, was one of the contributory causes of the Reformation upheaval.

Frederick Barbarossa achieved a momentary balance of the rival Guelf and Hohenstauffen houses, cut up and weakened the great duchies, and, by introducing the use of Roman-Byzantine law, set up a civil jurisdiction against the hitherto unquestioned canon law of the Church. This Indian summer of Imperial rule soon faded. In 1273 the electors chose the Swabian Count Rudolf of Hapsburg for the Imperial title, the first step in a story of land-lust which was to bring the Austrian dynasty into conflict first with France, then with Prussia, to terminate the Latin Renaissance, but not the Clerical influence upon the Imperial Government. Dante dreamed of the coming from beyond the Alps of a Cæsarian mediator amid Italian strife. The Swiss revolt against the Hapsburgs gave better auguries. About

the same time, Burgundy and Flanders ceased to be dependent on the Empire. In 1355, by the famous Golden Bull, the Papacy renounced all part in the election of German Kings, which was committed to a college of seven Electors—the princes of Bohemia, Brandenburg, Saxony, and the Palatinate, and the archbishops of Cologne, Mainz, and Treves. But for a century more there was no settled Imperial dynasty, and the hope of national unity passed away, not to be recovered till our own time.¹ Leagues of cities took the place of attempts to impose an "Imperial Peace." Within a few years of an heroic age, the feudal and hereditary princes had recovered their position; the great cities had introduced a new centre of power; German rule in Italy had come to an end; the failure of the Crusades and the victories of the Teutonic Knights on the Slavic borders had shifted the whole direction of political interest. The Crown became the sport of intriguing landlords, who could seize or buy the right of electorship, at the very time when Germany was pouring out its joy and wealth in the glories of the Gothic cathedrals, and the new burgher class was building its splendid town-halls and guild-houses.

We must guard against a misconception into which modern talk about nationality may lead us. Large-scale political unity is only important in the late stages

¹ At the death of Charles IV, in 1378, Germany enjoyed the attention of 362 rulers of 18 different orders: *Secular*: Kingdom of Bohemia (11 "circles"); Arch-Duke (Austria) 1; Dukes 42; Pfalzgraves 3; Landgraves 6; Margraves 21; Furgraves 4; Princes 3; Free Count 1; Counts 94; Knights 48; Frisia; The Swiss Confederation; Imperial Cities and Territories, 60; *Ecclesiastical*: Archbishops 7; Bishops 41; Abbots, 16; Provostships, 2.

of social evolution. The essential things to a people are social peace and social liberty, and the arrangements the best possible at the time for the creation and distribution of wealth. Government always tends to be an expression of the dominant economic force of the time. The State reflects the market. Small local markets are satisfied with small local States. A larger and stronger authority was needed both before and after the period which we call the Middle Ages. Neither peace, nor liberty, nor profitable production were easy to secure when Germany was in process of colonization. But when the eastern marks had been guarded, and the feudal settlement was most nearly complete, there was a condition not unfavourable to order and a gentle progress. The balance of rival authorities had its good as well as its evil side ; and Germany, divided and re-divided, never knew such tyranny, as a single sovereignty brought to France. The affectionate regard for the smaller princely families so freely illustrated in German literature had deep roots, absurd as it looks in a later age. Had it been possible for the feudal settlement to continue, political union might have come as soon as it was really needed.

A vast economic revolution, with its intellectual and social reactions, made that impossible ; and it is to the lack of a central intelligence capable of grappling with this revolution that the misfortunes we have now to witness must be traced. A town civilization suddenly broke through the feudal agrarian structure ; this was the first stage. Till the thirteenth century, trade filtered only very slowly from the high roads on the south, west, and north, into the interior of the country. Then, suddenly, a great flood of commodities and of knowledge

began to flow in through the North Italian cities. The towns grew with mushroom rapidity; the Rhineland hummed with traffic from the Mediterranean to the northern ports. Feudalism was now an impossible restraint. Every lordly estate was an obstacle to trade. At all costs the market must be widened; this demand is the economic basis for the movement toward national unity, the logic of the support which the new burgher class gave to Luther and the Protestant Princes. The Church meant clerical landlordism; the Empire, secular landlordism; the cosmopolitan dignities of both were quite out of touch with the common needs of common men. "A plague on both your houses," cries Shakespeare the Englishman, confident in the advantage even of a despotic monarchy. Unhappily, a balance of many powers is usually more uncertain and unsatisfactory than a balance of only two. In early English history, the balance of the two cities of Westminster and London, that is, of the Court and by far the largest and wealthiest body of citizens in the land, was a most important factor in national progress. The cities of Germany were too numerous, too equal in power, too jealous of their independence, easily to yield to any one of their number the primacy necessary to an effective central rule. The second stage of the revolution shows the cry for a national State lost in laments over the destructive effect of the change of the great trade routes upon the new city civilization. This, in brief, is the painful transition from mediæval to modern Germany.

CHAPTER III

THE LEGACY OF WAR

I. RENAISSANCE AND REFORMATION

THE confusion of post-mediæval Germany was, then, an anarchy not of exhaustion or decadence, like that of a thousand years earlier, or of two centuries later, but, at first at least, of abounding richness and variety of life. The enthusiasms and disappointments of the crusading centuries, the twelfth and thirteenth, the old wisdom recovered and the new arts gained then and after the destruction of Byzantium by the Turks in 1453, transformed European society. It is impossible to weigh the benefits against the bloodshed of the struggle with Islam; but never has there been a more fruitful failure. In the steps of the beaten Christians, from Syria and Byzance, up the Danube, over the Alpine passes from Venice and Genoa, through Provence, or round by sea to the Hansa steel-yards, came wondrous store of unknown or little known goods—sugar, spices, fruits, cotton, dyes, cloths, carpets, glass mirrors. Science began to supersede Scholasticism, that singular compromise of the old and new interests. The age of stained glass, sculptured stone, and wrought metal-work, of the heroic ecstasies of Walthar von der Vogelweide, Wolfram von Eschenbach, and Gottfried von Strassburg, of the Minnelieder and the Nibelungenlied, passed away. The opportunities of

town life, the new learning movement, the modern love of earthy realities and love of man as man, produced Dürer and Holbein. The Universities did for Reformation what the monasteries had done for mediæval literature. Under the magic touch of Greek, Hebrew, and Arab culture, there arose a sceptical spirit, at once inquisitive and tolerant, lacking both extremes, of brutality and brilliance, that marked the Italian Renaissance ; more humorous and less witty ; less rich, and so less prodigal ; more staid and earnest, as befits northern skies and soils ; more moral than intellectual, if the conventional distinction may pass, plainly prophetic of a Luther.

Money, that marvellous sprite, came into common use, and all the dry-bones of the feudal economy were shaken. The great fairs began to fade away, the caravans disappeared, the pedlar no longer showed his pack, for the day of shops and banks had dawned. In 1324, the monk Berthold Schwarz died in the accidental re-discovery of gunpowder, used two centuries before by the Moors in Spain, much earlier by the Chinese, and now to dominate the government of the world. In 1356 (ten years after Crecy) occurred the frightful visitation of bubonic plague, known as the Black Death, which is thought to have swept away a third of the population of Europe. Germany suffered less than other countries (hence the slower decay of serfdom) ; but Basel lost 14,000 and Strassburg 16,000 souls. In 1378 the Papacy broke in two. The hope of the great Church Councils waxed and waned ; but it was not till 1516, when the Renaissance was closing, that Erasmus published his New Testament, and a year later, Martin Luther posted on the door of the castle church at Wittenberg his ninety-five propositions against indulgences. German humanism began to come into its own when,

about 1430, Johann Gutenberg, of Mainz, perfected his press with movable metal types, aided and exploited by the rascally goldsmith, John Fust, to whom legend and genius afterwards gave an undeserved immortality as the learned doctor who trafficked with the Devil. The foundation of Freiburg, Basel, Treves, Tübingen, Mainz, and other seats of learning immediately followed. Finally (for a chronology is not our task), just before the end of the fifteenth century, Columbus and Vasco da Gama reached America and India by sea; and if the stream of Spanish gold and silver created great political evils, as well as a wide economic disturbance, sugar, cocoa, coffee, tea, and tobacco did much for the sobering of a world that had too often found its joy in drink and gluttony. These are chief among the factors which suddenly created an immense movement of men hitherto fixed in small, self-contained agrarian groups, and led to the gradual abolition of servile labour, the division and decline of the Church, and ultimately to the preponderance of town life, the rise of science and democracy, and the modern organization of militarism, industry, and commerce.

Western readers are so well aware of the fullness of this manifold change that the last chapter may seem almost purposeless in relation to the account of latter-day Germany. Yet failure to recognize the inequality of progress in Central and Western Europe, the differences, and the reasons for them, is at the root of many misunderstandings. At the outset, Germany took a profitable part both in the intellectual and the material sides of this western awakening. The imperial connection with the Lombard cities, the revived study of Roman civil law and Aristotelian logic in the thirteenth century, and the rise of free towns, had prepared the way. Why, then, is the Renais-

sance peculiarly Italian, and the Reformation peculiarly German? In a final analysis, because Italy was a rich, sunny, southern land, and Germany a relatively poor, hard northern land. The differences of character are derivative. There is a virtue of wealth and a virtue of poverty. Beauty, wit, subtlety, tolerance, courtesy, chivalric courage, are the prizes of the one, as endurance, faithfulness, industry, frugality, simple honesty, humour, and charity of the other. To name but one difference in the result, the womanhood of Germany has been permanently impoverished in comparison with that of Italy and France by lack of those opportunities and examples of splendid womanhood that shine in the midsummer height of the Renaissance. But wealth more hardly keeps its virtue; sooner or later arbitrary wealth falls to its temptations.

The Popes proved at last, as the ancient emperors had proved a thousand years before, incompetent for universal rule. Nevertheless they continued to be the richest sovereigns in Europe. The Church owned a quarter of German territory and three-sevenths of the Electoral power. When the Emperor opened a Diet, the Papal Legate stood beside him to signify the right of the absent partner. Every Prince-Bishop exhibited this double rule. But what it brought the Church in wealth, it cost it in moral influence. To maintain their electoral and territorial power the great prelates had become an aristocratic caste, recruited exclusively among the noble houses. In Rome itself the son of a fisherman could reach the Petrine chair; a butcher's son helped to rule England with the cardinal's hat. In Germany the Church lost the democratic character that had been its original strength: it lost, that is, its only restraint. Tithes, Peter's Pence, dispensations, indulgences, annates, pall money, scandals

of patronage and of jurisdiction, such was the seed that yielded the Lutheran harvest. The well-nigh universal evasion of the formal rule of clerical celibacy was itself a mere excuse for increasing the stream of fines that flowed to Rome, there to fill the great central fount of luxury and prodigality. Italy gained what Germany lost by clerical exaction ; and, since there is nothing like unearned increment for producing a sceptical conformity, there was no Italian Reformation. There the orthodox disbelieve ; here the heretics are terrible believers. It is not so much a topsy-turvy as appears at first sight. When Rome, never more than half-converted to Christianity, re-discovered her old paganism, a revolt of the grave north became inevitable. The architecture of Italy was the child of riotous wealth ; that of Germany was the child of devout sacrifice. The humble Gutenberg is the peer of Michael Angelo, and midwife of the modern world. Printing is the poor man's art, and carries with it at length the poor man's revolution. The Church immediately sets up a censorship, and thereby redoubles the energy of its critics. To the Sforzas and Medicis and Colonnas, the press is useless, vulgar, negligible ; to Luther, it is invaluable, though he scent in every type-letter a devilish appeal to mere reason ; as, to us, who must have both Paul and Apollos, it is indispensable.

Thought is fruitless if it goes not hand in hand with labour, and is most fruitful on its native soil. It may be, as Pater said, that " Hellenism, which is the principle pre-eminently of intellectual light, has always been most effectively conceived by those who have crept into it out of an intellectual world in which the sombre elements predominate." A Winckelmann lives, his best years in

Rome ; but a Goethe is only fully himself when he is back in the shelter of Weimar. Mme de Staël speaks of German imaginations being touched by " that love of the sun, that weariness of the north, which carried the northern peoples away into the countries of the south." Even in these restless modern days these are the exceptions that prove the rule. Each clime holds its own children by a mysterious cord. The German Renaissance arrived three centuries late in the last days of imperial glory of the city of Frankfurt, in the single figure of Goethe.

The first intoxication of classicism came to the favoured scholars of the gay southern courts ; the subsequent growth of philosophy and science, nearly all of which belongs to the colder clime where it is impossible to " give no thought to the morrow," is of mixed pedigree. Humanism stands intermediately, too fine for Roman corruption, but too fine also for great deeds in dark lands and days. Erasmus, the first scholar of his time, declared that wherever Lutheranism reigned good letters perished. Rather let us say that the Humanists forged weapons of which the Reformers could make only a clumsy use. Luther, it should be remembered, spoke before Copernicus, and half-a-century before Galileo and Kepler. Yet both types were necessary. Some soils must be ploughed deep. Where the Waldenses and other precursors had failed, Luther and Calvin succeeded. What mystics—Catholic, pantheist, or philanthropic—and humanists, radical or academic, could not accomplish, the rough, fearless, intolerant Saxon effected. Biblical orthodoxy has never proved as powerful or poisonous as sacerdotalism ; and the mere division of the clerical camp has aided the independent progress of speculative thought. The theological Reformation was, in fact, but a part—a much

spoiled, unfinished, and yet essential part—of a deep, wide, long continued movement of the western world towards liberty of thought and life.

In the transition from the Middle Ages, there is an extraordinary contrast between the two sides of the dying chivalry, its brilliant tournaments and courts of song at one end, and its relapse into sheer brigandage at the other ; again, between the bare life of the little villages, and the exuberant vigour of a chain of cities running along the Danube and Rhine to Flanders and the northern coastline. Valhalla lies in ashes on the north ; but the Mongol and Turk are an ever-present terror. On borderlands, life is short and will be violent. In a wide semicircle there is no rest, no surplus wealth, no play of ripe intellects. Rudolph of Hapsburg had no money to spend on minstrels and jousts ; and, when Vienna superseded Frankfurt as the metropolis, Italian and French influences were cut off, songs of love and war gave way to the cold business of conquest. Feudalism and chivalry had served their turn, though the hundreds of little States of Germany were slow to recognize the omens. All around the vague boundaries of the Empire, the idea of nationality was gaining force. In England, Parliament was already an established institution. France had nearly reached her modern extent. Denmark and Sweden were developing prosperously on the north. The eastern borders were, indeed, in constant flux, no longer from the impact of savage swarms, except when the Turks came on, but from the ambitions of growing national States, Bohemia, and Poland (with Silesia and Moravia between), and Hungary. Thus, our picture has been reframed. And, in a time when all moral authority, temporal and spiritual, was in solution, it was appropriate that the art

of robbery should be the first to adapt itself to the new circumstances.

The agrarian side of feudalism long continued ; its military side was on the eve of a great transformation. The age of the soldiers of fortune had come. Brandenburg (between Danes and Poles) and Austria (between Tchechs and Magyars) could still find work for the decadent swashbucklers of whom Luther asked the sour question : " What is the good of crusaders who do not crusade ? " There are cycles of militarist development corresponding with cycles of social opportunity or need ; and, when gunpowder began to be used effectively (with arquebuses by the Hussites in 1427, and with portable cannon before Orleans two years later), the defensive side of feudalism had become so far supreme—fortification had advanced so far beyond siege apparatus, and armour beyond hand missiles—that the old style of aristocratic warfare was at a deadlock. This is the last phase of feudal crystallization. Before the new weapons, the robber knight in his rocky castle was helpless. Götz von Berlichingen (of Goethe's first drama), and Franz von Sickingen, must go the way of Robin Hood ; the stakes of the game of war are multiplied tenfold, and the little players must disappear or enlist under the banners of the great. The characteristic figures of the next age are such as Tilly and Wallenstein, Maurice of Saxony, and Gustavus Adolphus. In France and England, the royal artillery broke the spell of mediæval landlordism. Money, printing, gunpowder : these are the essential forces of what is called the Reformation. They came into common use simultaneously at the time of the disastrous change in the great trade routes ; and between them Germany festered through centuries of indescribable strife, between

rival emperors, rival popes, rival kings of Burgundy, Bohemia, Poland; rival princes and nobles, lay and clerical, great and small. It would pass the wit of man adequately to portray this bestial warfare, or to count its cost. Never, perhaps, has the base side of human nature been so displayed as in the agony of transition from mediæval to modern Germany.

II. THE CITY LEAGUES

For a time, the great cities gave a chance to fruitful labour, a promise of good government, a refuge from the oppression of feudal lords. The "free cities" were practically independent republics; others enjoyed a large measure of freedom and prosperity. As they grew rich and lusty, they fought themselves free of the exactions of bishops and the tolls of the robber barons of the Rhine and Neckar. In the thirteenth century, Cologne, Aachen, and Strassburg could each call up 20,000 armed men, though the population within the walls was not much larger. Many city leagues and alliances were formed; but, whether from mere rivalry or entanglement in the quarrels of their over-lords, these rarely held together for long, except in the ports, where foreign adventure created a strong common interest, and even here the bond was very loose and uncertain.

The Hansa League, first formed by Ghent and Bruges in the twelfth century, became a large confederacy of cities of the Lower Rhine, the Elbe, and the Baltic, with its centre at Lübeck (founded in 1143, after the extermina-

tion of the native Slavs); and this was supported by a similar league of middle and upper Rhenish towns (1247). In the fourteenth century the Hansa included over seventy cities; for a time its fleets ruled the northern seas; its ships increased in burthen till they could not get through old London Bridge. The London Guildhall, where Anglo-German toasts and recriminations now alternate, was originally the hall of the Cologne merchants' guild (1203). Rhenish traders had been resident in London since before the Norman Conquest; and there was a Cologne association there in 1157. Hamburgers and Lübeckers followed a century later; and in 1282 the three cities joined in founding the famous "Steel-yard," or walled enclosure of warehouses, offices, wharves, and houses on the Thames which survived until the middle of the nineteenth century as a memorial of the pioneers of Anglo-German commerce.¹

As Lübeck became the great Hanseatic port, so Nuremberg became the chief manufacturing town, and Cologne the chief inland dépôt. Union of cities was dictated by the need of protection against the predatory aristocracy; of insurance against risks of transit²; of trade regulation and taxation along the traditional lines indicated by the guilds; and, later, by the influence of common coinages, banking, and joint stock enterprise. Here was a firm basis, had the time been favourable and German character equal to a task of construction of which ancient Greece could make only a temporary suc-

¹ The Steelyard, part of the site of which is now occupied by Cannon Street railway station, was finally sold in 1853 for £72,000.

² From Strassburg to Basel took eight days by coach in the fifteenth century, six days by diligence in 1600, four days a century later, and two days and a half by "eilwagen" in 1800. It now takes two hours by train.

cess. In the south and west, where the towns were chiefly industrial, the guilds developed toward municipal self-government; and the artisans everywhere obtained a share of power in the fifteenth century. In the northern ports—where foreign trade, requiring large capital, was more important than industry—the councils were more distinctly plutocratic. The rise of the Fugger family, in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, is not unworthy of comparison for boldness and rapidity with, and in other respects completely eclipses, that of the nineteenth-century American millionaires. The first Fugger was a fustian weaver in Augsburg. The second generation were merchants, the third international financiers; the fourth had a capital worth eight millions sterling of our money, making for some time an average annual profit of thirty per cent. by loans to Popes, Emperors, and Kings, and by mining, trading, and other financial operations. Unhappily they attached themselves to the House of Hapsburg (Charles V owed the Imperial Crown to them), and at last lost all their vast accumulations in the bankruptcy of Spain (1627). Other pioneers of international finance, the Höchstetters and Welsers, enjoyed a like meteoric triumph. Money-lending to instable monarchs was, in fact, at once a splendid form of gambling and a channel of political influence of first importance.

The city magnates of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries had bought or seized the rights of the feudal lords—legal jurisdiction, right of coinage, tolls, and tithes (there was no feudal right of direct taxation), and the right of demanding military service. In 1489 the free towns first obtained representation in the Imperial Diet, beside the two other orders of the Electoral

princes and the remaining nobility. The arts of luxury flourished here as among the proud burghers of North Italy, though with no such efflorescence of warm beauty and lurid personalities.¹ Stone took the place of wood in house-building; windows were universally glazed. Montaigne thought Augsburg, the bankers' city, more beautiful than Paris. This period of expansion, when

Venedigs Macht,
Augsburger Pracht
Nürnberger Witz,
Strassburger Geschütz,
Ulmer Geld,
Geht durch alle Welt,

was rapidly eclipsed as the closing of the eastern land routes, the trans-oceanic discoveries, and the rise of Denmark, Sweden, Holland, and England had their full effect. The southern cities first felt the pinch. Then, between 1535, when the Baltic was opened to all comers, and the end of the century, the power of the Hansa was broken. It had neither achieved any organic unity of its own, nor had a united nationality behind it. "Of what importance were empire and nation to the Germans of those days," asks a German writer, "and of what importance were they ever to the Hanseatics?" The Emperor was not impotent, however, and feudal superiors were very potent, for mischievous interference. The House of Hohenzollern, for instance, was very active in repressing the independence of the Brandenburg towns. In days when the Low Countries had no shipping, England no foreign trade, and Scandinavia no cities, and when all the

¹ "The sixteenth century was the age of discoveries; but no explorer came from the Hanseatic lowlands, and no voyage of adventure was undertaken from a Hansa town." Prof. R. Mayr in Helmolt's *History*, vol. VII.

neighbouring lands were politically as well as economically immature, the Hansa was welcomed as performing a valuable function. When it sought to convert general advantage into selfish monopoly, it stimulated the national development of its rivals. Then, situated between the rival powers of Denmark, Sweden, Russia, Poland, and Prussia, it sought with varying success to obtain a favourable balance of power, without any adequate means of enforcing unity even among its own members. The cities themselves were, indeed, weakened by the estrangement of the body of citizens and the Junkers, or land-owning merchant class, the violence of internal struggles, and the consequent instability of the municipal governments. The mysterious migration of the herring from the Baltic in the fifteenth century was a blow; the quarrel with England following Drake's seizure of Hanse ships off Spain was another. Finally, the league lost its best markets by the war in the Netherlands (sack of Antwerp, 1585), the ruin of Russia by the Mongols, and, above all, the ruin of Germany in the Thirty Years' War. German houses which had established themselves in Lisbon (Venezuela was founded by one of them, the Welsers) were ruined when Spain was lost to the Empire. The mouths of the Rhine fell to the Dutch, of the Weser and Oder to the Swedes, of the Elbe to the Danes, of the Vistula to the Poles. The time of Protectionist tariffs was beginning; and the cities and petty States of Germany took up the destructive fashion of setting barriers against each other's trade, when they were not engaged in more bloody feuds.

Meanwhile, outside the towns, the princely power had grown stronger, the imperial bond more shadowy. The territorial aristocracy obtained most of

the old royal prerogatives of jurisdiction, customs, coinage, protection of Jews, passports, and monopoly franchises. Coincidentally, the Empire lost its hold upon Burgundy, Flanders, Switzerland (after the peasant victory of Sempach, 1386). When an unusually able Emperor appeared, the traditional Cæsarian obsession always proved more powerful than the appeal to establish a durable order at home. It was thus that the handsome and chivalrous Maximilian, "last of the Knights," having obtained Burgundy and Flanders by his own marriage, matched his son Philip with the heiress of Spain and America, thus creating the Spanish dynasty in the next generation of which, under the Emperor Charles V, nearly three centuries of conflict between the Hapsburgs and the French monarchy were to be opened. England, France, and Spain had reached the point of territorial homogeneity and royal tyranny of which designs of universal rule are the natural outcome. Germany lay at the opposite extreme. While the future rivals, the Austrian Hapsburgs and the Brandenburg Hohenzollerns, the latter raised to Electoral rank in 1417, strengthened themselves by abandoning the practice of partition of family estates, the remaining nobles swayed to and fro in perpetual feud and rapine, with occasional lapses into a "Public Peace," as in the Rhenish Swabian league of 1381, and the Worms compact of 1495. As long as the colonization of the eastern provinces continued, the condition of the peasants was not bad; afterwards, between extortionate lords and usurious money-lenders, it became more and more wretched.

III. LUTHER AND THE PRINCES

The east was first in revolt. Nationalist feeling against German and Hungarian governors stimulated the Bohemians in the twenty years of warfare that followed the burning of John Huss in 1415. As the countryside was laid waste, what had been a Puritan movement, originating in the oldest University in the Germanic lands, and sustained by nobles and burghers alike, "became rather a struggle between aristocracy and democracy than between contending religious parties."¹ The note echoed in Savonarola's protest against civic luxury and clerical corruption in Florence had rung out long before in Prague, and had there become a familiar word. With it swelled the hatred of the dominant Germans, lay and clerical. The hawking of indulgences to finance a Papal feud, and the treachery which led to the death of the national hero, capped a thousand grievances. In 1420, Pope Martin V called the whole of Christendom to work against this heretic nation; but the cosmopolitan army fled before the fighting-clubs of the peasants it had scorned. Prague became a theocratic republic, in which a strain of Christian anarchism constantly coloured the turbulence of the citizens. The flame spread slowly westward as far as Switzerland and Alsace.

The peasant insurrection of 1525, during which a large part of central Germany was devastated, many castles, monasteries, and churches being burned, and 100,000 lives were lost, showed like marks.² The extra-

¹ Count Lützow: *The Story of Prague*.

² The ferocity of the wars of this period is indescribable, the suffering unimaginable. In the Burgundian campaigns, Charles the Bold destroyed Liège with nearly every living soul (1468);

ordinary Anabaptist movement of the following decade combined with this spirit of revolt a final flash of the communism of mediæval Christianity, and something of the aggressive rationalism of the Swiss Reformers. Beginning with a refusal to appeal to physical force,¹ it was turned by persecution and by absorption of the defeated peasantry and craftsmen into violent courses, ending in the sixteen months' siege of Münster, its "New Zion," and the massacre of June 25, 1535. The Prince-Bishop who thus suppressed the heretics was himself by way of being a Protestant; perhaps that is why Münster is to this day a Catholic city.

— To Luther, the poor man's revolution was a wholly odious thing. One of his pamphlets inveighed "Against the Murderous and Marauding Hordes of Peasants." He was for using constituted authority, such representatives of it as remained and he could enlist, for a purpose national and even political, as well as universal and spiritual. Denounced and patronized as an enemy of the popular movement, he still insisted on the right of the temporal sovereign to decide questions in the new church. The condemnation of the traffic in "indulgences" was an act of economic revolt; but it went much further. Justification by faith, the rule of conscience and reason, meant primarily the destruction of a spiritual yoke. That a German Bible—brought, as Heine said, "out of

and at Murten (1476) 26,000 persons are said to have been slain or drowned. "A war with the Poles transformed Prussia into a desert; 1,019 churches had been destroyed, those that remained standing plundered and desecrated; out of 21,000 villages, but 3,013 remained; and, as if to render the misery complete, a dreadful pestilence broke out in 1463, which carried off 20,000 persons in Dantzic alone" (Menzel, vol. II, 196).

¹ Belfort Bax: *The Rise and Fall of Anabaptism*, p. 11.

a language that had ceased to exist into one not yet born"—should be set up in place of an Italian priestcraft was enough for Luther's ambition, and certainly surpassed all that could then be foreseen. The no less urgent task of political reconstruction was for other and far later hands. Enough for the moment to rescue the individual man from a mental and bodily oppression. Luther would have none of the radicalism of Zwingli, the scepticism of Erasmus, or the mystical extravagances of the day. His limitations were his strength. A true Saxon, he invoked the Gothic virtues against Latin vice; whipped the "haughty, spiteful mammonists, and accursed, covetous cut-throats that suck out land and people," but did not on that account forswear the aid of nobles and wealthy merchants; plainly abjured God in his prayers "not to give his own Son the lie"; spoke severely to undutiful children and indulgent parents; by the example of his own simple life showed what a married clergy might be, and by his own vigorous writing and speaking what the German tongue could do. Germany became the cradle of the Reformation not by any novelty in the Protestant teaching, but because the seed fell on ground peculiarly well prepared. The accumulated sense of centuries of wrong and stupidity burst out when, with the aid of the printing press, the white light of Hebrew and Christian ethics was turned upon the worst anarchy of the times. Since 1452 no Emperor had knelt, and none would again kneel, in Rome for his crown. Why should Germany be taxed to build Pope Julius a new St. Peter's, or even to immortalize Michael Angelo and Bramante? The tide was rising. The Albigenses had been easily destroyed. Wiclif and Huss were stouter foes. The Pope had proclaimed a crusade against the Bohemian doubters; the German

Princes had carried out the decree to their cost. Was Germany now in turn to swallow the same deadly dose?

Luther was driven rapidly, step by step, to a denial of the authority of papal decrees, of the celibate basis of the priesthood, its dogmatic scheme, and its sacramental powers. The Church, diseased in its Italian heart with luxury and intrigue, had no idea how to tackle this new Teutonic giant, who summoned Christian princes to rebel against Anti-Christ. A Spanish Emperor! that was a portent, to which the converted soldier, Inigo de Loyola, his "Company of Jesus," and the Inquisition were soon to give grave meaning. For the moment, however, Pope and Emperor were hopelessly embroiled: here lay the opportunity of the Protestant Princes. A pious Catholic, yet altogether governed by worldly motives and foreign interests; Charles V had been driven into hostility to the reform movement by the need of Papal aid in holding North Italy against the French. The victory was no sooner complete, with the capture of King Francis (1525), than the Pope, with Arles and Venice, went over to the French side, and everything he had gained was lost. Within seven years of the excommunication of Luther, Charles and Pope Clement were at war, and Rome was sacked by Spanish and German soldiers, with a Lutheran Prince of Orange at their head (1527). The collapse of the Papacy measured the fatuity of its policy, as the growth of the Protestant League measured the revolt against Hapsburg rapacity. But, as the causes of the change which tore England, Denmark, Sweden, a half of Germany and Switzerland from the old spiritual allegiance were not wholly, perhaps were not mainly, moral and intellectual, so it was not to the Luthers, Melancthons,

Zwinglis, and Calvins that the fruit of victory came. Well might the ex-monk of Wittenberg cry, before his death in 1546, when the serious fighting had begun, looking backward with a shudder: "If I had known what was before me, ten horses would not have drawn me to it."

Common men wanted some centre of authority, at any cost. Geneva dreamed of a theocracy that would work like one of its newly invented watches. Luther stood for the strong general sense of sluggish mankind when he denounced rebellion; Münzer, the Anabaptist, spoke only for the few bold spirits when he denounced Luther. Whether we like it or not, the mass of men always and everywhere is conservative; the German mass responds even less rapidly than the Latin or English to sketch plans of a New Zion; and at a time when the social ties and habits of centuries were being loosened, when feudalism was dying and nationality was hardly conceived, nothing but a slow and partial response to large new ideas could be expected. Amid storm, ruin, and the breaking up of laws, to how few could it be apparent that an age of rationalism was dawning. The old certainties, temporal and spiritual alike, having failed, and being in course of destruction, new certainties must be found. So the liberal Zwingli could persecute the sectaries of Zurich, Melancthon could dismiss the Anabaptists to death, and Calvin could direct the burning of Servetus—a slow torment maintained for two hours. So, too, the mass of simple Protestants—shaking the sky with their war-songs, like "Ein' feste Burg ist unser Gott"—found themselves ranged in armies under an Elector of Saxony, a Margrave of Brandenburg, a Duke of Brunswick, a Landgrave of Hesse, who, for their part, little troubled by spiritual anxieties, had a more substantial

aim and purpose in the debilitation of the Empire and the plunder of the great Catholic dioceses. Every man his own confessor, every Prince his own Pope—a rich idea! The bishops were “heretics” new, and must be paid in their own coin. War is, at best, a demoralizing business; and this struggle ran rapidly to the depths of demoralization. Many cities expelled the monks and priests, setting up Lutheran preachers in their stead. In Swabia, Franconia, and the Rhineland, the nobles seized the church lands, and deposed the ecclesiastical princes. When the Emperor, in 1530, required the restitution of these properties, the Protestant leaders opened negotiations with Francis I of France (who had lost Italy and Flanders in the effort to sever Austria and Spain), and with England, Sweden, and Denmark. They were playing, in fact, the old feudal game with new pieces and perilous stakes.

Every German innovation seems to be dogged by some ancient ghost. Any democratic tendency among the Reformers had been extinguished by fear of the revolted peasants and the Anabaptists. The Protestant movement in France and Holland was also mainly one of the middle and upper classes; but it proceeded along the very different, the more stern and logical, lines laid down by Calvin; and while, in the latter case, it gave strength to a colossal effort of national liberation, in the former it at least set a strong check upon, though it did not ultimately prevent, the growth of a royal absolutism. Religious ideas, however, were in solution; moral ideas were nearly everywhere at a low ebb. There is no reason why we should talk to-day of “wars of religion.” As the Church was disestablished in England because Henry VIII wanted another wife and more

gold, as the profits of Hawkins's buccaneering and Drake's raids were an essential motive in Queen Elizabeth's Protestantism, so the militant side of the Reform in Germany was essentially an affair of Princes who wanted the lands and revenues of Church and Empire; of city patricians who wanted freedom from taxation and interference; of Prussian Dukes who would be free of Austrian control. Duke Moritz of Saxony is an example: a Protestant, he refused to join the Schmalkaldic League till he had tricked the Emperor into giving him the confiscated estates of his cousin, the Elector. Then he turned upon the Emperor, and, while he was engaged in resisting the oncoming Turks, brought a French army into Lorraine, and set his own mercenaries to the pillage of Innsbruck. It was these treasonable victories that gave Metz to France, and led to the Peace of Passau (1552), confirmed at Augsburg three years later, by which the political supremacy of the Emperor was broken, and toleration was promised to both Protestants and Catholics, subject to the power of each Prince to decide which should be the religion of his subjects. Religious liberty was won—"for, at most, 20,000 privileged persons."¹

IV. THE THIRTY YEARS' WAR

In the interval that followed, Charles V died, leaving his brother, Ferdinand I, of Austria, his German possessions and the imperial title. The sectarian strife in France culminated in the massacre of St. Bartholomew (1572),

¹ Menzel, vol. II, p. 270.

which incidentally gave a Huguenot colony to the rising town of Berlin; England had broken the Armada of Spain (1588); and, after a terrible struggle, Holland won its independence from Spanish and Austrian tyranny (1609). This is the period of the Catholic revival in Germany known as the Counter-Reformation. Protestantism showed a constant fissive tendency; under Jesuit guidance the old Church developed a new vigour and organization. On both sides foreign allies were sought and complications multiplied. A favourable view may impute to the monarchs and statesmen of the time religious views of this colour or that, and some groping instinct after a new European settlement in the shape of a "balance of power," to be guaranteed by royal marriages, mercenary armies, and national banks. There is more evidence of the means than of any such purpose in their use. It is the hey-day of the soldier of fortune; a horrid gulf between the age of faith and the age of reason; the mailed fist its only law. And Germany was the cock-pit of the new warfare, in small part because of the earnest moral strain in the Teutonic nature, much more because the economic revolution through which Europe was passing was here most acutely felt; because Teutonic particularism, aggravated by the feudal division of authority, and the long duel of Empire and Papacy, had left this land more divided than any other, more devoid of political capacity, to all appearance impossible to unite either for internal order or external defence. Such poor ties as there were had been unwittingly broken by the Lutheran revolt.

The Thirty Years' War (1618-48) has been spoken of as "the last of the Crusades, or wars on behalf of Catholicism, a desperate struggle to revive the Holy Roman

Empire."¹ The combatants do, indeed, fly sectarian colours; the Emperor Ferdinand's remark, "rather a desert than a country full of heretics," indicates a sort of piety; and, in the Bohemian phase, commencing with the murder of the Vienna envoys by the native method of "defenestration" (throwing out of windows) at Prague, there was a genuine revival of the old feud of religion and race. But, in the subsequent strife of "Catholic" and "Protestant" princes, the swooping-in of Denmark, Holland, and England, and afterwards of Sweden and France, to balance the very un-Holy League of Austria, Bavaria, Spain, and Protestant Saxony, all but the barest pretence of religious motive is cast aside; and we are landed suddenly in a period when selfishness, violence, perfidy, stand out naked, and unashamed in the service of personal and monarchical aggrandizement. Swiss infantry, Spanish arquebusiers, Hungarian Hussars, Polish Cossacks, the scum of Europe, fought in or followed after the German, Danish, Swedish, and French forces. The Dutch Tilly, the Bohemian Wallenstein, and the Swedish Gustavus—three great soldiers who, by the use of lighter arms (Gustavus introduced the first musket, the first carbine, and the first light artillery), and by a new rapidity and vigour of movement, revolutionized the art of war—were, no less, three ruffians of varying degrees of ferocity.

Tilly's claim to immortality lies in the record of over thirty battles, the outstanding event being the siege and massacre of Magdeburg (May, 1631), when the city was destroyed with all but four thousand (and these at death's door) of its 30,000 inhabitants—a foul deed that would have been impossible if the Swedish relievers

¹ W. Barry, *The Papacy*, p. 138.

had not been hindered by the professedly Christian and Protestant Electors of Brandenburg and Saxony. "Since the destruction of Troy and Jerusalem, no such siege has been seen," Tilly reported. Next year he went to his account; and the very Catholic Emperor called back Wallenstein from the gorgeous retirement of his palace in Prague, whither his previous outrages had driven him. After the first phase of the war, the Emperor had given the Upper Palatinate to Bavaria, with whom it remains to this day. After the second phase, two archbishoprics, twelve bishoprics, many monasteries, and other property in the north had been recovered to the Church. Here was solid stuff to defend against burglarious heretics like the Margrave of Brandenburg and the Landgrave of Hesse. Wallenstein had, it is true, earned a black reputation by the atrocities of his mercenary troops. But the property of the Church must be defended. The generalissimo made his terms; and there was no cant about them. The whole Imperial army must be absolutely under his command, the fruits of every victory absolutely at his and his soldiers' disposal. Butcheries by the Swedes made the concession easier. Sixty thousand men flocked to Wallenstein's standard, and he met Gustavus Adolphus—to whom he had only recently offered his aid "to chase the House of Austria over the Alps"—in the desperate battle of Lützen, in Saxony, where the victorious Swedes lost their King (November 6th, 1632). Six years later, Wallenstein was assassinated by Irish and Scotch mercenaries, acting for the jealous Emperor.

One more chief character of this devilish play must be named. Richelieu, his work of centralizing the government of France nearly complete, had encouraged the

invasion of Germany ; now, a Catholic Cardinal, he became the heart of the attack upon the Catholic Emperor. At his death, Mazarin, with Turenne and Condé as the most daring exponents of the new military art, continued the war, to an unspeakable accompaniment of famine and pestilence. Frederick William, the "Great Elector" of Brandenburg, a favourite subject of eulogy by the present Emperor, might have put himself at the head of the North German princes, and driven out both French and Swedes. It was not by any such desperate and unselfish adventures that the power of the Hohenzollerns of Prussia was to be built up. At length, the duel between French Bourbons and Austrian Hapsburgs was brought to a temporary close by the Peace of Westphalia (1648), the most important European treaty since the compact of Verdun (see ante, p. 29). Mad with anger at being thus recalled, Turenne and the Swedish general Wrangel sacked and destroyed the cities on their backward march.

No human skill could closely measure the account of humanity against the authors of this generation of strife. If nearly all that preceded it may be traced to the play of geographical circumstance upon the original Teutonic character, and to the influence of the feudal heritage and the long duel of Papacy and Empire, all that followed has been governed by the results of the Thirty Years' War. To speak of religious results of the struggle itself would be a mockery ; but the breakdown of those degenerate partners, Sovereign Church and Holy Empire, made religious and secular freedom for the first time fully possible. Catholics, Lutherans, and Calvinists were left on a footing of formal equality, the Protestants returning the Church property they had seized since 1624, but not

earlier ; and there has ever since been a broad division between the Catholic south and the Protestant north. The chief political results were the recognition of the independence of Switzerland and the Netherlands, and of the French seizure of the episcopal districts of Metz, Toul, and Verdun, to which all Alsace, except Strassburg, was now added, with two points on the right bank of the Rhine ; the cession of Pomerania to the King of Sweden as a German Prince ; the union of Brandenburg with Prussia, and of Hungary with Austria ; the reduction of the Empire to an empty form, and the gift of full sovereignty, with power of making treaties and foreign alliances, to its three hundred and fifty German States.

The social and material results were even more momentous. Some estimates state that the population was reduced from sixteen millions to four millions, others that only six millions were swept away by slaughter, hunger, and disease. In Saxony 900,000 men fell in two years. The population of Baden was reduced from 500,000 to 48,000. Augsburg lost 60,000. The Hanse League virtually expired in 1630, and the commerce of the Rhineland and the northern ports fell into Dutch and British hands. Many cities never recovered their old position ; material wealth disappeared ; trade was extinguished. Robbers infested the ruined towns, where the dead lay in heaps unburied. Cannibalism was not infrequent. An epidemic of immorality, drunkenness, and crime issued in insanity, suicide, and hideous punishments. Where the peasant could no longer live, the game preserves of the nobility spread. Villages disappeared, traces of them being found long afterwards by surprised hunters. In many parts the land fell out of

cultivation, and wolves and bears returned to their ancient haunts. The histories of this period, Menzel's or Janssen's, for instance, are almost unreadable. "Ferdinand found Austria Lutheran, thickly populated, and prosperous; he left her Catholic, depopulated, and impoverished. He found in Bohemia three million Hussites, dwelling in flourishing cities and villages; he left merely 780,000 Catholic beggars. Silesia, happy and blooming, was left desolate; most of her little cities and villages had been burned to the ground, her inhabitants put to the sword. Saxony, the Mark, and Pomerania had shared the same melancholy fate. Mecklenburg and the whole of Lower Saxony had been ruined by battles, sieges, and invasions. Hesse lay utterly waste. In the Pfalz the living fed upon the dead, mothers on their babes, brethren on each other. In the Netherlands, Liège, Luxemburg, and Lorraine similar scenes of horror were of frequent occurrence. The whole of the Rhenish provinces lay desert. Swabia and Bavaria were almost entirely depopulated. The Tyrol and Switzerland had escaped the horrors of war, but were ravaged by pestilence."¹

Generations passed ere Germany recovered from this killing-off of millions of its stoutest manhood. A long generation had to pass ere the mere sex balance of the remaining quarter or third of the population was restored; and in that time what elements of demoralization must have entered into the national life! In Franconia, bigamy was actually legalized in 1650, on account of the excess of women over men.² I have already suggested that the

¹ Menzel, vol. II, pp. 376-7. Cf. vols. xv and xvi of Johannes Janssen's *History of the German People* (an English translation by A. M. Christie. Kegan Paul).

² After the war there was a great increase of illegitimate

great preponderance of women over men after this and later wars must be accounted a very injurious influence on German character. For, as a large disparity in the other direction, for instance, on newly colonized frontiers, will coarsen manners, and give a false and mischievous value to women of a bold type, so a great excess of women competing for homes will aggravate the worse side of both sexes, encouraging the violence of the one and depressing the dignity, influence, and independence of the other. More depends upon the normal balance of the sexes than scientists and moralists have yet seriously attempted to show; and it is one of the worst results of warfare to disturb this balance, directly by slaughter, indirectly by producing special currents of emigration or immigration. The even progress of any community requires a complex co-operation of approximately even numbers of the two sexes. Any violent disturbance of this balance not simply interrupts the normal growth in numbers, it upsets every social activity, every circle of social organization, the family, the workshop, the school, the church, the city, the State. If it be true, as biologists agree,¹ that, in the process of natural and social selection, the males normally represent variability and the females stability, the males active intelligence and the females affection and patience, it is evident that a society consisting mainly of one sex will exhibit in a special degree the characteristics of that sex. Such morbid exaggeration grows and perpetuates itself, as it were, by contagion. The bold woman of the miners' camp sets up a standard for her sisters and children; the women of the harem represent births. For statistics see Tholuck's *Kirchliches Leben im 17 Jahrhundert*, I, 350.

¹ See Geddes and Thomson: *The Evolution of Sex*, especially ch. xix.

an opposite extreme. A generation having a very large majority of women and children will have a morbid character of its own, and will leave deep marks upon the economic, political, intellectual, and moral life of the future.¹

It seems, therefore, that a growth of sentimentality, a recovery of priestly and aristocratic power, a disappearance of political spirit, an indifference to public life and its ideals, may be postulated as among the natural results of the wars consequent upon the breakdown of the mediæval organization of German society. These fruits of death and rapine are less measurable, but far more important, than the political and ecclesiastical changes, on which the attention of the historical student is usually centred. The whole fabric of society is degraded and weakened. From 1650 onward, while the masses fell into superstition, rarer spirits—especially women—gave way to the emotional excesses of Pietism.² After 1700 this movement captured nearly all the country churches; even when the rationalist reaction came—when humble scholars poured out of the town Latin schools to the universities to pursue the new studies of science and of antiquity, and monthly journals exhibited the first flights of the new literature—the contemporaries of Lessing cannot be called a manly race. Sentimentality, affectation, and subservience poisoned social manners. Men wept easily, and for hours together. Women were little

¹ The sexual morbidity of the time found expression in curiously erotic church songs and hymns. Cf. A. Ritschl, *Geschichte des Pietismus*, 1884, vol. II, p. 73 ff., also Scherr, *Geschichte deutscher Kultur*, 1852, p. 412.

² Cf. Lic. E. Sachse, *Ursprung und Wesen des Pietismus*, 1884, pp. 1-4, where references to the most authoritative writers are given.

educated; and though the housewives were the backbone of the growing middle-class, marriage was essentially a business arrangement. Students seem to have been frequently consumptive or hypochondriacal. We shall see how deeply the later romantic movement was coloured by these disorders. The beginning of the eighteenth century found the mass of the people abject, gloomy, discontented, but hopeless. From the Imperial circle of Vienna to the knightly household with its fringe of junker dependents, there were many thousands of Court offices and employments. Most had their price; all ministered to some petty pride; the worship of place and the greed for titular distinction date back to this blackest period of German history, when an extensive traffic arose.

V. THE RISE OF PRUSSIA

Other symptoms of social collapse are not matter of speculation. The great art impulse of the early sixteenth century was destroyed. Culture and education came to a standstill; many ancient families died out. With the disappearance of any general authority, the princely Courts fell into petty imitations of the absolutism of Paris. But the mercantile policy which may strengthen the government of a great State, though at the cost of the mass of its people, for a small community is slow suicide. The guilds obstructed any new departure in commerce. As the power of the towns waned, that of the soldier nobles waxed. The old system of local justice and administration disappeared, or lost all virtue. At the

very time when Grotius (1583-1645), turning his¹ ^{dictated} upon the Reformation, was laying the basis of modern^{ly} international law,¹ torture was being used with a new callousness. The rack, the wheel, and the gallows became universal appendages to the courts of township and province. "The chopping-off of hands, the cutting-out of tongues, blinding, pinching with red-hot irons, cutting slices out of the back, tearing out the heart, impaling, wrenching off limb by limb with the iron wheel, quartering with four horses or with oxen, to lengthen the torture, modified the simplicity of beheading, hanging, and burning" (Menzel). This is the great period of witch-burning, in which the extremes of superstition and license meet. "It was a period when the noble mother gave her daughter with pleasure into the arms of the profligate prince and the courtier gave up his wife to him for money" (Freytag). In Pomerania and the east the peasants² were pushed back into serfdom; in the west overwhelming burdens were cast upon them. Even in 1750 over half of the population of Germany were serfs. Disbanded soldiers, welcomed at first for their prize-money, remained to plague the countryside. The deficiency of labourers and servants was met by penal laws and a press-gang system. Serfs had to give half their time in labour for their masters; savage game laws and corporal punishments were enforced.

Here is the fount of the new flood of mercenary service

¹ "When by the Peace of Westphalia a crowd of petty principalities were recognized as practically independent States, the need of a code to regulate their intercourse became pressing. Such a code Grotius and his successors formed out of what was then the private law of Germany, which thus became the foundation whereon the system of international jurisprudence has been built up during the last two centuries." Bryce: *Holy Roman Empire*, p. 387.

which was presently to carry German peasants across the Atlantic to fight the battles of the Hanoverian Kings of England; a service for which, in eight years, the princes of Hesse-Cassel and other small States received pay amounting to five millions sterling.

The foundation of three intimately connected institutions characterizes, in fact, this chaotic morning of the modern era—standing armies, bureaucracies, and the State system of stimulating commerce known at first as Mercantilism, afterwards as Protection. Feudalism was dead. The princes were now sovereigns, not vassals; they in turn had to recognize that they could only secure adequate domestic service and military force by money payments and training. The Thirty Years' War left a mass of impoverished men who had had no school but that of Tilly and Wallenstein, and who responded readily to the new method of enlistment for pay in standing regiments representing the districts where they had lived. The old militia continued; but it could not be used for foreign war, was ill-equipped, and was more and more supplanted by regular soldiery. At first, these were raised by private individuals and hired to the prince, and many were the evils of the traffic in *chair à canon*. Then troops were raised by the prince and hired out under the most profitable alliance obtainable. As the central power grew, volunteer recruiting and the farming of contracts were superseded by compulsory levies, and State arsenals and factories. Between 1693 and 1705, the first experiments in conscription were made in Brandenburg and Saxony. In 1708 forcible recruiting was abolished, as "a too great exaction." In 1720 it was revived¹; at the same time supplementary volunteer

¹ "The officers were so protected in their violent extortions
of

recruiting was carried on by brutal agents, who conducted their slave hunts with ingenious barbarity. Gradually the pay of men and training of officers were regularized, weapons, munitions, and commissariat improved. Finally, the loose system of conscription was tightened, under stress of extreme fear, into compulsory military service. Coincidentally, the State needed more expert administrators as it added one function to another; there, again, Paris offered a model. England, saved from the need of a large home army by its naval power, was also saved from an over-development of bureaucracy by the early growth of popular influence in Parliament, the vitality of its unpaid local government, and the competing interests of manufacture and trade. Germany became a prey of militarism and bureaucracy because it had none of these advantages, and no national spirit to extinguish the warring ambitions of its many rulers. Mercantilism was the general European method of maintaining the two sides of the State machinery. In an ignorant community, it is easier to get a pound by indirect than a shilling by direct taxation. Hence all the specious eighteenth-century arguments as to the necessity of stimulating industry and a "favourable balance of trade" (which, incredible as it now seems, really meant paying away a maximum in exports and getting a minimum of imports

that they openly despised all legal restraints. If there were a great deficiency of men in time of war, a formal *razzia* was arranged; the city gates were beset by guards and every one who went in or out was subjected to a fearful examination; whoever was tall and strong was seized; houses were broken into, and recruits were sought for from cellar to garret. In the Seven Years' War, the Prussians even endeavoured to catch the scholars of the upper forms of the public schools in Silesia, for military service." Freytag: *Pictures of German Life*, II, 18.

in return). This superstition, first effectively exposed by Adam Smith, presently fell into discredit, but has been revived in a modified form in the last half-century. It was, however, the essential basis of the first development of the new national governments.

The warfare of the century after the Peace of Westphalia exhibits the sovereigns of Germany and their preposterous ambitions, intrigues, pretensions, betrayals, and treacheries in the most unfavourable light. Austria and Prussia alone display a faint dignity. We shall see that the idea that these States were built up by preternaturally sagacious sovereigns—if it means anything more than that they clapped their wild nobles and unhappy serfs into uniform—is a myth. They grew into "Great Powers" by a certain mean capacity for taking advantage of geographical and historical circumstance. Much as they had suffered in the long war, they were not devastated like the little buffer States of the west. The hierarchical traditions of the Empire gave its larger units a natural primacy when the whole began to break to pieces. Austria, dominated by Papal and Jesuit influence, an ancient, wealthy, centralized State, pushed down the Danube after the retreating Turk, light-heartedly entangling herself in a web of irreconcilable races. Protestant Prussia, where the imperial power had always been weak; based on the large holdings of the northern plain, its waterways and ports; poor, hardy, disciplined, comfortably distant from Vienna and Paris; a little fighting State working on the new military-bureaucratic lines, first rose upon the ruins of Poland. The three days' battle of Warsaw (1656), where a small force of Brandenburgers and Swedes routed a Polish host five times as large, proved the worth of a well-led State army. In

1663 the sovereignty of the duchy of Prussia was fully recognized.

In 1672, Louis XIV delivered the first blow at Holland which was to clear the way for further French expansion. He had first bribed England into neutrality and Sweden into alliance, and had made a secret arrangement with the Emperor for the future division of the Spanish territories. Frederick William, the "Great Elector" of Brandenburg (1640-88), was drawn to the defence of his nephew, William of Orange, by political instinct as well as material subsidies. Finding it impossible to get effective Austrian aid, however, he made peace with France in 1673, in consideration of a payment of £800,000. Some German historians call this "stooping to conquer"; a less flattering term might be applied to the way in which Prussia entered upon the path of a "Great Power." The act stimulated Austria to independence; and a year later the Elector was fighting along with Imperial, Dutch, and Spanish troops. The war went on with varying fortune till 1679, when all parties were exhausted. Meanwhile, Frederick William had cleared the Swedes out of North Germany, only to be compelled by France in the end to give back Pomerania. Two years later, Louis treacherously seized Strassburg, which remained to France for nearly two centuries, and other points in the Rhineland. From 1680 to 1685, Frederick William was a pensioner of France, while the Emperor Leopold was engaged in opposing the Turks in Hungary. In 1688, Louis XIV declared war against Austria; the Palatinate was ravaged, and Heidelberg, with its splendid Renaissance castle, and other Rhenish towns, destroyed in this "third war of aggression." The Great Elector's son, Frederick, supported the Emperor; and they were joined

by England, Spain, and Holland. The struggle was ended in 1697, without any great territorial change, by the Peace of Ryswick.

In November, 1700, the last Spanish Hapsburg died; and in 1701, Frederick was crowned, with Imperial consent, as first King, not "of," but "in," Prussia. The formation of the "Grand Alliance" against Louis XIV, and the "War of the Spanish Succession," to decide between the French and Austrian claims, immediately followed. Again, Germany was a cockpit, again her princes were ranged on both sides of a struggle in which her people had no material interest; Prince Eugene and Marlborough heading Austrian, Prussian, and Hanoverian forces, while the Electors of Bavaria and Cologne supported France. The battle of Blenheim (August 13, 1704), in which 20,000 Bavarians and French fell—the Blenheim of little Peterkin's inconvenient question—may, perhaps, be counted the first of modern battles, in the sense that it was fought to destroy the enemy on the field, not merely to capture a position or a fortress. It was decisive, so far as German territory was concerned. England was tired of the conflict in 1710, and Holland withdrew a year later. At length Prince Eugene had to give in: the war was terminated by the Peace of Utrecht (1713) and the Peace of Rastatt (1714), by which Austria abandoned her Spanish claims, and received part of the Spanish Netherlands, Naples, and Milan as compensation. In 1733 there was another of these terrible outbreaks of rapacity, when the last Hapsburg Emperor, Charles VI, supporting the claims of the Elector of Saxony to the Polish throne, lost Lorraine.

His death and the accession of Maria Theresa led to the much more serious "War of the Austrian Succes-

sion" (1740-48). By a Hapsburg family compact of 1703, confirmed by the "Pragmatic Sanction" of Charles VI in 1713, it had been arranged that the lands of the German Hapsburgs, if the male line failed, should pass to the female line. This was accepted by most of the individual States, especially by Hungary, and became the formal basis of the modern Austrian State. Frederick William I, of Prussia, notably helped in getting it confirmed by the rest of the Empire, despite the opposition of the Electors of Bavaria and Saxony. In 1740, the year of Charles's death, Frederick "the Great" became King of Prussia. He at once threw off his father's loyal policy, demanded Silesia as the price of supporting Maria Theresa, and, without awaiting the inevitable refusal, proceeded to one of the most brazen thefts recorded in modern history. There were two rival claimants to the Austrian succession, the Elector of Bavaria, and the Elector of Saxony, who was also King of Poland; but Frederick of Prussia was the enemy who counted. His father, a shrewd, but vulgar, stingy, and brutal martinet, whose hobby was the collection of giant grenadiers, had left him a full cash-box, a working administration, and a well-equipped army of 80,000 men. Frederick, whipped and imprisoned as a boy, a Voltairian sceptic and amateur of letters, science, and music as a young man, suddenly discovered unusual powers as a soldier. Acting always despotically, without legal or moral scruple, he rapidly invaded Silesia, and, after defeating the Austrian troops, allied himself with France, Spain, Bavaria, and Saxony against Austria. The Bavarian Elector had been proclaimed King of Bohemia, and was actually being crowned Emperor, when the Hungarians rallied to Maria Theresa, drove the invaders out of Austria,

and seized the Bavarian capital. Prussia, being confirmed in her conquest, now joined the despoiled Empress, and the Saxon Elector promptly went over to the combination. A series of Austrian successes; and Frederick, feverishly bent on self-aggrandizement, and fearing to be robbed of his spoils, performed another *volte face*, declaring for Charles of Bavaria, and winning a series of battles in what is called the "Second Silesian War" (1744-5).

There was now revealed, for the first time, a thoroughly modern situation: Prussia faced Austria in open rivalry for the leadership of the Germanic peoples; and France, conscious of the change, made friends with her old enemy, now no longer dangerous, against the upstart of the north. On the other hand, England, which had helped Austria with an army under George II, but wished to further her colonial interests and to secure Hanover, came over to the side of Prussia. Except Hesse, Brunswick, and Gotha, this was her only ally against Austria, Saxony, France, Russia, and Sweden. Frederick opened the Seven Years' War in August, 1756, by a sudden and successful descent upon Saxony. Making many blunders, he retrieved them all by sheer driving power. In Bohemia he scored a victory, and then suffered successive defeats. The Duke of Cumberland gave up Hanover, Hesse, and Brunswick to the French; and the prospect was black when, by a triumph of rapid movement, Frederick defeated a much larger Franco-Austrian force at Rosbach, saving Saxony, and another greatly superior Austrian army at Leuthen, recovering Silesia. With English aid the east bank of the Rhine was cleared; the Russians were set back at Zorndorf; and the French were routed at Minden. The tide turned, and turned again; the defeats of Kunersdorf, when the Prussians

lost 17,000 men, Dresden, and Landshut, were followed by victories at Liegnitz and Torgau. At length, early in 1762, Frederick was able to make peace with Russia and Sweden; and a year later a general peace was concluded in Paris. All Germany had been scourged, and the economic and moral progress of the Hapsburg lands had received a grave check, in order to confirm Prussia's conquest and her right to rank as one of the Powers, to prove that the great days of the House of Austria were past, and that Germans must look elsewhere for their future leadership. The Hapsburgs, essentially a reigning family, resting on the Church and a long experience of the old political arts, set amid the multi-racial patchwork of the south; the Hohenzollerns, a territorial House, rough, dull, and poor as a rule, but firm-fixed on the vigour of the north: such is the contrast that henceforth becomes more and more explicit. In the outer world, more substantial changes—the loss of India and Canada by France to England—cost less. That the orthodox faith, and a conservative as well as a majestic character, were no more competent than Voltarian philosophy to fortify an eighteenth-century sovereign against what Frederick gaily admitted to be wholesale brigandage, was shown ten years later, when he persuaded Maria Theresa to join Catherine and himself in the iniquity of the first Polish partition (1772). After twice falling out over the Bavarian succession, the German rivals were again at one in issuing the Declaration of Pillnitz against revolutionary France, and in helping Russia to the final dismemberment of Poland (1795).

Then, as Attila had scourged Rome, Napoleon scourged this decadent "Empire" of post-feudal robbers.

VI. THE NAPOLEONIC DELUGE

In the east, the Serf-State of the Tsars had overflowed upon Poland and Turkey. In middle Europe, Prussia was rising to primacy, while Austria was beginning to face down the Danube; between these two and France, as between two hammers and an anvil, scores of little feudal States, spiritless and poverty-stricken, weltered. In the west, England and France were in full revolution, first victims of forces that were, in the following century, to transform the world. England—the fundamental work of political liberation accomplished—had settled down to an aristocratic order, only to be forced by new economic factors to a wholesale social reconstruction. In France, the ancient régime had quickly collapsed, and the political change might have passed with comparative ease had she enjoyed any such splendid isolation as her island rival. How stood Germany in this day of trial?

A generation of peace might have been used by wise rulers to organize a Germanic Union strong enough to present a barrier against the coming torrent, and so to turn most happily the course of European history. But this would have involved an abatement of privileges in the little semi-feudal Courts, occupied in building straight streets and rococco palaces after the model of Paris, and an end of the bolder ambitions of Berlin and Vienna. Above all, and everywhere, it would have involved radical economic change. Under earlier rulers, from the Great Elector to Frederick II, something had been done in Prussia to modify the power of the hitherto irresponsible land-owning class. Many of its local administrative

rights had been transferred to a bureaucracy modelled on that of Paris. The tie of serfdom was loosened, and the management of the Crown domains improved. Though modified, however, the tyranny of the landlord was maintained because it lent itself to military ends. Restlessly active himself, Frederick stirred his subjects to industrial activity, gave them some rudiments of education and justice, and established a sentiment of the supreme dignity of State service. But he left no place for spontaneous public work, no form of national representation ; and it was inevitable that the personal feebleness of his successors should be reflected in every part of the administration. Too much had been subordinated to the building up of an army which numbered, at Frederick's death, a fifth of the adult male population. The inherent contradiction between a feudal land system and a modern military State made itself more and more evident. The nation was sharply divided into three main classes—noble, burgess, and peasant—each restricted as to occupation and marriage. The law recognized an essential inequality between these classes, and the individuals composing them. The nobles, who were practically doomed to the service of the State, were not only exempt from most taxes ; while they had the monopoly of the officership, they were free of compulsory service in the army. Except the towns, the Crown domains, and the "free colonies," the whole land of the Kingdom was owned by the nobility, squirearchy, and ecclesiastical bodies. East of the Elbe, the mass of peasants were serfs ; elsewhere, some peasants (about a fifth) enjoyed a sort of copyhold tenure, but all were subject to more or less arbitrary exactions of labour or tithe. Copyholders' children had to serve for three years or more on

the landlord's estate; they had to get permission to marry; they could be whipped for idleness. A rather larger number of cottiers were in a still more servile condition; while the day labourers, as numerous as the other two classes put together, were dependent on their hire without any power of resistance to extortion. The landlord was generally judge in his own suit, and exercised police powers. He could take away the peasants' land, and in many places could claim half his movable property at death. In the towns, the growth of industry and commerce was restricted, on the one hand by strong survivals of the old guilds, and on the other hand by Protectionist barriers. The central government had fallen largely, under Frederick William II and III, into the hands of a camarilla whose insolence and incompetence for any serious work, military or diplomatic, was fatally exemplified in 1806.

The middle States were generally in a like condition; the best that could be said was that Frederick's examples had supplanted futile imitations of the magnificence of Versailles. In Mecklenburg, in 1802, when the west was all fevered with the dream of equality and fraternity, Stein found "the entire labouring class under the yoke of serfage." "The home of the Mecklenburg noble, who weighs like a load on his peasants, instead of improving their condition, gives me the idea of the den of some wild beast who devastates everything about him, and surrounds himself with the silence of the grave." Hanover was ruled by a group of nobles for the English King. In Mainz, Trèves, Cologne, a horde of monks, nuns, and beggars gathered in the shadow of the ecclesiastical princes. Goethe's Weimar was a relatively bright exception amid two hundred little Courts where, as in

the fifty imperial cities, and hundreds of knightly domains in the south-west, every form of popular government was dead. Finally, Austria had just swung back from the arbitrary reforms of Joseph II, and restored the power of the Church and the agrarian magnates. The feudal Empire, which had provided a real economic and social equilibrium in the Middle Ages, and had latterly hung uncertain between its Prussian and Austrian extremes, was *in articulo mortis*. A breath of wind would blow away all its time-honoured shams.

Most educated Germans welcomed the tocsin of democracy when it rang out in Paris. Not so Frederick William II of Prussia, the incompetent voluptuary, or the Emperor Leopold, Marie Antoinette's brother, who had proposed foreign intervention on the morrow of the King's flight from Paris (June, 1791), and, through Kaunitz, berated the French nation (February, 1792) as he might do a recalcitrant margrave. Not so the ecclesiastical princes of the Rhinehead, hosts of the emigrés, noble and clerical; or that Duke of Brunswick, the Prussian Commander-in-Chief, who, before Valmy, threatened to destroy Paris, if the royalties were hurt, as Titus destroyed Jerusalem. But where, in the minds of these offended majesties, reactionary monarchism ended and territorial greed began, it would be impossible to say. There were even nearer and more substantial objectives than the hope of gain at the expense of France — on the Netherlands border, for instance. Once afoot, Austria counted on rich return in Bavaria, Italy, Poland. Prussia owed nothing but injury to the Bourbons. Neither the people nor the statesmen shared the King's sympathies. Greed and jealousy alike suggested, rather, a new raid upon Poland. The lesser kingdoms gravitated toward

one or other of these two majors. The swarm of petty principalities did not count, until the bill had to be paid ; for what can it matter in such an issue " whether a regiment which had its captain appointed by the city of Gmünd, its lieutenant by the Abbess of Rotenmünster, and its ensign by the Abbot of Gegenbach, did or did not take the field with numbers fifty per cent. below its statutory contingent ? " ¹ The Paris Assembly had renounced all intention of conquest ; who, indeed, could dream what havoc a young artillery officer, now at Toulon, would presently make in this mediæval museum ? While Kaunitz was demanding compensation for certain German nobles, whose feudal rights over their peasantry had been abolished by the French when they took possession of Alsace, Roget de Lisle, an artillery officer of the Strassburg garrison, was writing the " Marseillaise," setting the pace for militant democracy a long generation before the modern German war songs were invented.

The momentary success of the German attack, confirming the threats of the Emigrés to win back their lost powers and to take a terrible vengeance, provoked Danton's policy of Terror, the September massacres, the proclamation of the Republic, and the creation of the popular army with which Napoleon was to plough his way across Europe to Cæsarian power. Before a single pitched battle was fought, Mainz had opened her gates to Custine, and proclaimed the republic—a notable encouragement to the crusade of democracy which followed. Nowhere, except across the Channel, was there a stoutly organized nation to resist the French arms. England entered the contest with a frank invitation to

¹ Fyffe, *History of Modern Europe*, i, 12, citing Häusser, *Deutsche Geschichte*, i, 88, and Vivenot, *Herzog Albrecht*, i, 78.

Austria to compensate herself by annexation in Northern France.¹ Pitt paid for the services of 60,000 Prussian troops; but they remained inactive on the Rhine while the King marched to Warsaw. "Your Serene Highness," said the Duke of York to the Austrian commander, "the British nation, whose public opinion is not to be despised, will consider that it has been bought and sold." The British nation was, in fact, no exception to the rules of government still generally prevailing. Thus basely consoled in Poland, Prussia abandoned her territories west of the Rhine to France (Treaty of Basel, April, confirmed by secret treaty in August, 1795), and—after playing Judas Iscariot to the Austrian Pontius Pilate, as a pamphleteer of the day put it, at the farcical Congress of Rastadt (November, 1797)—for ten years stood out of the ever-widening conflict, leaving Switzerland to lose her independence, the Rhineland to be ravaged, and Austria to suffer humiliation from Marengo to Austerlitz. The German principalities became playthings in the hands of Buonaparte, bent on driving a French wedge across Central Europe between Prussia and Austria. Electors were made and unmade. Most of the "free cities," now oligarchies sunk in debt, lost their privileges. Bishopricks were removed; the estates of the Church were parcelled out among the lay princes by their French patrons; hundreds of monasteries were dissolved. Offices and businesses hitherto closed were thrown open. Serfdom and feudal rights were abolished, and religious toleration was enforced. Taxes were increased, but were

¹ See despatch Grenville to Eden, Sept. 7, 1793, on which Fyffe comments: "In the face of this paper it cannot be maintained that the war of 1793 was, after the first few months, purely defensive on England's part."

levied more equitably. French ideas were spread everywhere. Brutally as it was carried out, much of this work may be called reform ; and, so far, it was welcomed in middle Germany. But the Napoleonic destruction of the temporalities of the Church was naturally regarded by Catholics as a barbarous persecution ; it gave the Church over into Ultramontane hands, provided it with a new ground of popular appeal, and set it in determined feud against the State. The very success of the new methods, administrative, financial, and legal, only stimulated the degeneration of an insatiable conqueror. Thus, for six years the Kingdom of Westphalia presented the extraordinary spectacle of " a licentious Court and a good Constitution ; beneficent reform sacrificed to an insane policy ; Latin enlightenment transfusing Teutonic darkness, and Teutonic industry honestly enlisted in the cause of a Latin Government."¹ No sooner ripe, however, than the good fruit of reform was devoured by greedy courtiers and soldiers ; and the momentary vision of a French Germany passed into a deep detestation of the alien exploiter.

The seizure of the Duc d'Enghien on German soil, and his murder in Paris, followed the seizure of Hanover² ; and still Prussia did not move. Frederick William III, who

¹ *Studies in Napoleonic Statesmanship : Germany*, H. A. L. Fisher.

² May, 1803. "For two years the miseries of the French occupation were felt to the full. Extortion consumed the homely wealth of the country ; the games and meetings of the people were prohibited ; French spies violated the confidences of private life ; law was administered by foreign soldiers ; the press existed only for the purpose of French proselytism. It was in Hanover that the bitterness of that oppression was first felt which subsequently roused all North Germany against a foreign master." Fyfe, p. 182.

had come to the throne in 1797, could not quite bring himself to accept Hanover from Napoleon in the spring of 1805; and in November he had pledged himself to Russia against France. Six weeks later, his incomparable agent, Haugwitz, the tom-fool of Tallyrand's anterooms in Vienna, was signing away his own and his country's honour in the treaty of alliance with France which added Hanover to the territories of the Prussian Crown. Bavaria, Württemberg, and Baden had already gone over to the French service, rather than fall under the Hapsburg yoke. The Corsican, standing proud in the palace of Schönbrunn, tossed crowns to the first two, a nominal sovereignty to the third, and fragments of territory to all. On June 12th, 1806, the lowest depth was reached, the Kings of Bavaria and Württemberg, the Elector of Baden, the Landgrave of Hesse, and a dozen other princes, formally seceding from the Empire, and, as a "Confederation of the Rhine," undertaking to provide Napoleon with an army of 63,000 men for any wars he chose to wage. Two months later, obedient to command, Francis II resigned the Imperial Crown; and the "Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation" came to an ignominious end.

Who could suppose this to be the veritable birth-hour of German nationality? Not Napoleon; it was not that fear which now turned him to demand of the Hohenzollerns an account of their Right Divine. Trafalgar, leaving England unassailable by sea, had driven his intoxicated mind to the wild plan of sealing the Continent against British trade. The decree, extorted from Frederick William on March 28th, 1806, closing the ports of Prussia, was the first act of this novel form of warfare, and, despite early appearances, the beginning of the decline of the

Corsican Star. England's retort, the practical destruction of Prussian shipping, and blockade of the coast, produced a ruinous dislocation of commerce and industry throughout Central Europe, and thereby a stint of goods that was only partly cured by smuggling. These injuries, aggravated by the arrogance of French pro-consuls and revenue officers, wholesale confiscation of goods, and a general sense of humiliation, set up in cottage and counting-house an altogether new current of revolt. The King found out Napoleon's fibs about Hanover at the same time that Pitt found out Frederick William's fibs on the same subject. On the top of this double exposure came the brutal execution of the Nuremberg bookseller, Palm, and Napoleon's rude references to Queen Luise. The short, sharp campaign of September, 1806, shows French power at its height, Prussian incompetence and discord at their worst. Shame of utter rout at Jena-Auerstädt; flight of the Court to Königsberg; and, having rifled the tomb of Frederick the Great, Napoleon stands triumphant in Berlin with the cry: "I will make your nobles so poor that they shall beg their bread." One after another, the Prussian fortresses' surrendered, generally without a struggle—Magdeburg with 22,000 men. After the further defeat of Friedland (June 12, 1807), you see the wretched Prussian King standing beside the Niémen, just out of hearing of the raft where the Tsar and the Corsican are making terms at his expense; Queen Luise waiting at a neighbouring inn for an opportunity to beg the conqueror's pity. No pity there: Prussia is dismembered; robbed on the west to make Brother Jerome King of Westphalia; on the east, to make the Elector of Saxony a King and Grand Duke of Warsaw; loses five million subjects, and five and a half millions sterling of indemnity; must

reduce her army to 42,000 men. Two years later, Napoleon had completed his second conquest of Austria (more rewards for Bavaria and Saxony, fruitless bravery of Hofer's Tyrolese). In 1810 Bremen, Hamburg, Lübeck, and the neighbouring coasts were annexed to France in a final effort to make the embargo on British trade effective. In June, 1812, the brilliant French Court at Dresden, where submissive kings and princes jogged elbows with insolent officers, was broken up, and a cosmopolitan host of half a million men plunged into the forests and prairies of Russia.

It was in these five blackest years that the redemption of Germany was begun. No thanks to the House of the Hohenzollern. Baron von Stein (1757-1831) was placed in power on the recommendation of Napoleon, who knew his skill in finance, on October 5th, 1807; and he was dismissed and banished, by order of Napoleon, as an enemy of France, on November 24th, 1808. Into this short span his great legislative work was crowded. The French acts of liberation on the Rhine and in Poland gave the needed stimulus for the great change. It began with the Edict of October 9th, 1807, by which all personal servitude in Prussia was abolished, property in land was thrown open to all, the old class divisions and the barriers between town and country were destroyed, and labour, agricultural and industrial alike, was given freedom of movement. Four years later, Hardenberg extended these reforms by a bold arrangement for changing quasi-servile into freehold tenures, by removing military burdens on the peasantry, and by sweeping away all trade restrictions due to the old guild customs. The judicial powers of the landlord class continued until 1848. Perhaps the value of personal freedom, for instance to the British peasantry

at this period, has been exaggerated ; no doubt the system of compulsory military service, established by Frederick the Great, set certain limits upon the despotism, of the Prussian landlords. But the continuance of serfdom in Germany, centuries after it had ceased in England, implies an immeasurable inferiority in political experience and aptitude.

Stein himself was no democrat, but a very Conservative Liberal. He wished to establish representative government, both central and local. His Parliament would, however, have been very weak beside that of Westminster ; and even for this much there was as yet no considerable popular demand. " Self-government is essentially a matter of habit," says Morier ; " and the Prussian nation had contracted the habit of having their government done for them."¹ The reforms to which the King and the old officials reluctantly assented were imposed by royal ordinance without any form of national assent. Frederick William and his Court would lick the shoes of Napoleon ; against any essential change of the habit of obedience among their own people they would have fought to the death. To establish a free uniform citizenship, to suppress the " camarilla " system in favour of regular ministries (responsible, of course, only to the King), and to improve the official class by the application of the examination test, was the utmost yet possible in the central administration. With local government, Stein was more successful. In the towns, a representative municipal system with considerable powers was set up, the mass of citizens being enfranchised and certain magistrates being fully occupied and remunerated. In

¹ *Memoirs and Letters of Sir Robert Morier*, 1828-76, by his daughter, Mrs. Rosslyn Wemyss. London : Arnold, 1911.

the country there was more opposition and less support for reform; little, therefore, was accomplished. No less important was the new school system established by Wilhelm von Humboldt. Compulsory school attendance was first established in Prussia as early as 1716; popular education was favoured by the growing demands of the State service, as well as by the intellectual awakening of the latter half of the century. The law of 1794 declared schools and universities to be State institutions, and all higher school teachers State officials. In 1810 and the following years, military and educational reorganization proceeded together; the universities of Berlin, Breslau, and Bonn were founded at this time.

These changes would in themselves have gradually transformed the old-fashioned military life—under which the necessary number of rural serfs were torn from their homes, and placed for as long as twenty years under the arbitrary rule of incompetent aristocrats and squires—if only by subjecting townsmen to military duty. The memory of Jena was a spur to more drastic amendment. A military commission, established by Hardenberg, continued by Stein, presided over by Scharnhorst, and advised by Gneisenau, laid the basis for a new army, in a four-fold plan designed to evade the limitation of numbers required by Napoleon. Every sound adult male was to be liable for service, either (1) in the limited active force of 40,000, which was enrolled for only a short term, so as to liberate the recruits rapidly for drafting into (2) the Reserve; (3) a Landwehr, or militia, for internal defence only; and (4) a Landsturm, or mass levy of the population. The last two divisions, of course, could only be organized when the heavy hand of the conqueror was raised from the Berlin government. This new military

organization is the real basis of the modern Prussian State ; that it long preceded the establishment of any national representative system accounts for many of the most radical differences between German and British life.

These were the days when the sturdier survivors of the old régime, like honest Blücher, asked why Prussians could not do what the Spaniards were doing, when ruinous extortions of money and supplies for the Moscow army, and acts of personal vengeance such as the confiscation of Stein's property, were destroying the last remains of Teutonic patience. True, Germans had no reason for gratitude to their native lords and masters. True, in every land annexed to France feudal bonds were broken, and the Code Napoleon introduced a new level and regularity of justice. These boons tempered, but could not balance, the injuries of the blockade and the foreign conscription. The vassal States of the Rhineland were still content ; but when, for the first time in history, the Austrian Emperor appealed by manifesto to " the German nation " to join in union for the common defence, it was evident that a new day was dawning. Schill's brave but ill-designed rising in Prussia (April, 1809), and minor insurrections in Westphalia and Württemberg, showed that the people would no longer wait upon Hohenzollern imbecility : while Aspern and Wagram broke the tradition that Napoleon was invincible. Had the British force, doomed to die of fever in the swamps of Walcheren, been landed in the Elbe, millions of lives might yet have been saved, and a long generation of reaction in Europe modified.

From this time onward, however, as the star of Napoleon fell, that of Metternich rose. Stein was in exile at the

Russian Court, vainly fulminating against the cowardice of the Prussian Government and Court in placing themselves at the call of Napoleon (February, 1812). A year later, as the spectral remnants of the Grand Army staggered homeward, his opportunity came. Not waiting for Frederick William, whom the gallant Yorck had already disobeyed, Stein called the people of East Prussia to arms; and the War of Liberation was begun. The Treaty of Kalisch (February 27, 1813) secured Russia's co-operation at the price of the greater part of Prussia's Polish provinces, a fortunate sacrifice which marked out the westward destiny of the Hohenzollern State, and fixed its preponderantly Teutonic character. Within a month, confessing his previous feebleness, the King declared war on France, and ordered the formation of the Landwehr and Landsturm, a warning of the final gravity of the struggle which capped the patriotic fervour of the people. Saxony and the Rhenish Confederation still grovelled. Napoleon momentarily held them by the victories of Lützen and Bautzen; then he made the immense mistake of a two months' armistice for bargaining with the old fox of Austria. Up came the swarms of conscripts from the northern villages, raw and poorly equipped, but much better stuff than the dregs of the French conscription; and, though the defeat of Dresden showed that the best soldiers need competent generals, Blücher's victories and masterly evasions—"these creatures have learned something," cried the Corsican, bitterly—rectified the account.

The tide had visibly turned. Austria stood with Russia and Prussia; and the King of Bavaria, for seven years a servile client of Paris, hastened to join the Allies. The "big battalions" had changed masters. On October

16, 1813, three hundred thousand men invested the French force, little more than half as large, in Leipzig ; and after three days' fighting, in which nearly a hundred thousand men fell killed and wounded, the greatest battle of modern times—"the battle of nations"—gave back to Germans their Fatherland, and shattered the unconscionable fabric of the Napoleonic Empire. By the end of March, 1814, the Bourbons had recovered their "legitimate" throne, and Napoleon was on the way to Elba. Rich in irony are the scenes this strange turn of time's whirligig brings to the City of Light : the cold face of the Duchesse d'Angoulême portraying a loveless and unloved Restoration ; the Cossacks cheered in the streets where the threefold gospel of democracy had been proclaimed ; the Tsar and Talleyrand schooling the returned Emigrés to a semblance of constitutionism ; behind them all, Metternich working the strings of the puppet show. There is one more spasm, a hundred days of madness and slaughter, culminating with the arrival of sturdy old Blücher and his Prussians at Waterloo, ere the world's greatest soldier is finally disposed of.

It is probable that five millions of the stoutest men of Europe were slain in course of the Napoleonic Wars, while the Continent was strewn with crippled lives. How many scores of millions of pounds were extorted by France as "contributions" or fines from conquered States, how many hundreds of millions were seized in the form of requisitions or destroyed during the great brigand's predatory expeditions, can never be calculated.¹ And

¹ Perris: *War and Peace*, p. 194. "In all the wars that made Napoleon Emperor, the French armies fed themselves exclusively by means of contributions and requisitions. So the war of 1805

these calamities, it is to be remembered, do not stand alone in our story; they are but the culmination of three centuries of intermittent warfare, including the Peasant War of 1524-5, war with the Turks (1529), war with France (1532), the Schmalkaldic war (1546-7), continued with intervals till 1552, the Thirty Years' War (1618-48), wars with France (1672-3, 1674-8, 1688-97), war with the Turks (1683-99), the war of the Spanish Succession (1701-14), the Silesian wars (1740-2, 1744-5), continuing as between Austria and France to 1748, and the Seven Years' War (1756-63). Undoubtedly, the great marvel of human annals is the power of social recuperation. The immeasurable impoverishment, physical and material, due to the events traced in this chapter is, nevertheless, a fact which most unhappily distinguishes this land from its neighbours. That the break-up of feudalism and the division of the old Church left Central Europe, already injured by the change in the trade routes, a prey to a thousand-fold tyranny and particularism is vitally important to a proper understanding of our subject. But the governing fact of German history, without which Goethe and Hegel, Heine and Wagner, Schopenhauer and Nietzsche, Marx, Bismarck, and His Imperial Majesty Wilhelm II would be incomprehensible, is the impoverishment of individual character, of social manners, ties, and culture, of material condition, and of the political sense of the German people in centuries of warfare.

was made. In 1806 and 1807, the Prussians were not only subjected to requisitions, but also to contributions amounting in three years to 245,091,800 thalers (about £37,000,000). The war indemnities paid to France independently of these direct fines amounted to another £40,000,000. During the campaigns of 1809, 1813, and 1814, Napoleon practised the same system." Jean de Bloch, *La Guerre*, vol. iv.

CHAPTER IV

A TRAGIC CYCLE OF GERMAN GENIUS

I. PHILOSOPHY, FROM KANT TO NIETZSCHE

ANY attempt to trace in detail the development of the German intellect is beyond the scope of the present volume ; but it is impossible to overlook the singular fact that the period of the most utter national humiliation and disintegration was the period of the greatest power and brilliance in German philosophy, literature, and music. Between the birth of Kant in 1724, and the death of Goethe in 1832, there shone, beside these supreme masters, a galaxy of talent such as has, perhaps, brightened the fame of no other nation in an equal space of time—Lessing, Wieland, Herder, Schiller, the Schlegels, Arndt, Körner, Jean Paul Richter, Heine, Uhland, in literature ; Fichte, Schelling, Hegel, Schopenhauer and Herbart, in philosophy ; Bach, Handel, Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, Weber, Spohr, Schubert, Schumann, and Mendelssohn in music, and many more. It is an extraordinary thought that these men should be pouring out their wealth of reflection and imagination at a time when their rulers were pursuing the brutal adventures sketched in the last chapter, and the masses of their countrymen were suffering all the ills to which humanity can be led by the greed of feudal degenerates and soldiers of fortune. The Carlylean hero worshipper, the devotee of pure art, or

pure science, or other transcendental things-in-themselves, may ask what Kant can have to do with Frederick the Great, or the author of "Faust" with the conqueror of Jena. Yet, connection there assuredly was, and one more intimate than Duke Karl August of Saxe-Weimar meant when, on Napoleon's abdication in 1814, he asked : "What will Goethe say now of his tutelary deity?"—the tie of patronage or admiration. For genius only seems to come by accident, to grow out of itself, indifferent to circumstances. If it were really so, why was there no great painting or sculpture in eighteenth-century Germany? Or, rather, why should there be any particular crop of genius in a time apparently so unfavourable? The natural history of great men has yet to be seriously studied; and, first, a host of false idealisms have to be cleared away. It serves patriotism, and so is not denied, that Shakespeare and his contemporaries were related to the general life of their time; but, if the Elizabethan galaxy illustrates an uprush of national vigour and pride, and if the law of genius is to be generalized from such a case (or that of Periclean Athens, or Virgilian Rome, or Dante's Florence, or the Antwerp of Rubens), how are we to account for this association of the highest German thought with the desolation of the Fatherland, or for the phases through which thinkers and artists alike passed, or for the dearth of great originality in later days of imperial strength?

The answer would seem to be that, in every society deserving the name, there is a fund of intellectual activity which may be encouraged or depressed, and will certainly be coloured by circumstances, but which, if not destroyed, will find its outlet, when one way is blocked, in another; and which may, as it were, be spread out through

many trickling streams, or be forced into one or two deep channels. Wordsworth's sonnets are no more outside the sphere of economic law, the law of production and distribution, than Worth's fashions or Krupp's guns. So far from transcending local and temporal influence, genius is commonly a very good index of environment. Dante is unmistakably mediæval Italian, Luther unmistakably of Reformation Germany, Shakespeare unmistakably Elizabethan English, Tolstoy *the* Russian of the Nihilist period. In each there is much of the day mixed with something of eternity. Even in the short cosmopolitan phases of European thought, as in Goethe, the marks of time and place appear. What the giant cannot or does not do is significant, as well as what he does. And, having done this and not that, having arisen here and not there, he is still dependent on circumstance for recognition. If Beethoven had been born a painter, it is in the last degree unlikely that we should ever have heard of him; for German burgherdom, recovering from one war only to be plunged into another, had no money for great canvases, though quite enough for concert parties. That is only the beginning. There are many inspirations—hope, despair, sensual pleasure, ambition—beside pure love of the best. Beethoven takes himself from the quiet little University town of the ravaged Rhineland to Catholic and Imperial Vienna, gay and proud in its firmly established aristocratic traditions; but he is still the child of Bonn, the heart-torn exile. Here is the contrast, as a good observer has drawn it: "Mozart,—grace, liberty, certainty, freedom, and precision of style, an exquisite and aristocratic beauty, serenity of soul; Beethoven—more pathetic, more passionate, more torn with feeling, more intricate,

more profound, less perfect, more the slave of his genius, more moving, and more sublime. Mozart refreshes you, like the 'Dialogues' of Plato he respects you, reveals to you your strength, gives you freedom and balance. Beethoven seizes upon you; he is more tragic and oratorical, while Mozart is more disinterested and poetical. Mozart is more Greek, and Beethoven more Christian. One is serene, the other serious. The first is stronger than destiny, because he takes life less profoundly; the second is less strong because he has dared to measure himself against deeper sorrows."¹

If this is true of the most absolute of the arts, much more so is it of that department of thought which seeks a rational explanation of the self and its experiences. There have always been retiring devotees. But as, amid the turbulence of the Middle Ages, the growing number of recluses produced a monastic system, so, amid the disintegration of Germany, speculative minds fled to the philosopher's study. The multiplication of little States carried with it the multiplication of little Universities; and each must have its comprehensive Socratic umbrella, its chair of Philosophy. The powers-that-be even encouraged this development; for, where poetry, drama, religion—appealing necessarily to the mass mind—always threaten orthodoxy, and where science is for ever provoking revolutionary change, metaphysics appears to be a wholly innocent occupation. At the same time, it exercises the brain; as gymnastics take the place of bread-work, so metaphysics serves when the normal application of mind to practical affairs is forbidden. Goethe (in one of the talks which his Boswell, Eckermann,

¹ *Amiel's Journal*. Mrs. Humphrey Ward's translation, p. 40.

records) deplored the joyless absorption in the Idea of the youth of his day, and longed to remodel them "somewhat after the English, with less philosophy and more power of action, less theory and more practice." The petty precursors of Bismarck knew that a generation of metaphysicians is easily governed. True genius, like kings, must be not only born, but crowned. The metaphysician, however, asks for only the smallest Court, the humblest civil list: porridge, a candle, pen, ink, and paper are his sole necessities. Königsberg, Heidelberg, Tübingen, Jena offered more than this bare minimum. Hence a constant competition of wits, and, at last, the elaboration of an immensely, indeed, to the average carnal man unintelligibly, complex speculative system. With the passing of disorder, and the establishment of national unity and industrialism, this system loses its vigour, and new forms of intellectual activity arise. The Humboldts may be said to represent the meeting point at which Kantian philosophy gives place to applied science as the characteristic field of German intellectual activity; while Bismarck and Marx, a little later, represent the birth of a new type of politics. The demands of practical life are exhausting; and, to-day, Germany dismisses the *Critique of Pure Reason*, not merely from lack of knowledge, as Comte dismissed astronomy from his category of the useful sciences, but from lack of interest.¹ Our analysis does not prove that German Philosophy has been useless—it has immeasurably enriched the mind-processes of the whole western world. But its prominence and its character were both artificial, being governed and

¹ Save the Neo-Kantian epistemologists, who still worship at the shrine of Kant as the founder of the modern theory of knowledge.

coloured by the abnormal circumstances of time and place.

We have seen that the Reformation broke the flow of the Renaissance, contributed to a terrible political and social anarchy, and, so far from offering any new bond in place of the shattered feudal-Catholic organization, helped to weaken the spirit by which such a bond might have been constructed. So complete was the disruption that, at the time when, in England, political thought was most active, in Germany it disappeared. The characteristic trend of British philosophy, from Bacon to Bentham, is away from metaphysics toward psychology and political economy, with a constant emphasis on experience and utility; afterwards, under the influence of the Industrial Revolution* and evolutionary science, the practical bent is strengthened. This is at once the measure and the penalty of our political and commercial development. We shall see how opposite has been the German case. On the ethical and theological side, the Lutheran movement had effected only a very partial change. Luther's extraordinary hallucinations, his belief in a Devil who was constantly making noises in the cloisters at Wittenberg, at whom he had thrown an ink-pot in the castle of Wartburg, who entered into the bodies of little children, and broke crockery over the heads of obstinate parsons; his implicit belief in witchcraft—"I would have no compassion on these witches," he said, "I would burn them all," and burn them they did, in thousands—show how far he was from the enlightenment either of ancient or modern times. Luther, Calvin, and Knox all insisted upon the right to punish heresy, and the Church's monopoly of the means of salvation. The fierce, not to

say blatant, fatalism with which Luther declared belief in the doom of damnation to be "the acme of faith" is something inconceivable to the modern mind. And not only to the mind of the twentieth century; for, if it is permissible to imagine William Shakespeare discussing *Hamlet* in London with Giordano Bruno, in the generation following Luther's, it is hard to think of either of those noble minds taking Predestination seriously.

To pass from Luther's gloomy code to the Kantian philosophy is to cross a vast gulf. We have to look to Descartes, Spinoza, and Hume for a bridge. The literalism of the Renaissance, while it was saturating and paganising the Latin Church, had revolted the Teuton Reformers; but, as it developed toward a perfectly free rationalism, it brought into the land of the Reformation an influence, hitherto sadly lacking, at once moral and intellectual. The "methodic doubt" of Descartes (1596-1650) was the true antidote to the mystical-magical hotch-potch of Paracelsus and a swarm of German quacks. "*Cogito, ergo sum,*" from an empty formula, suddenly became a starting point of intellectual adventure. Clearness of perception, not Scripture or any other dogma, was to be the test of truth. Thought was declared to be the essence of the soul. The existence of an infinite Being was shown, not by miracles, but by the presence of the idea of the infinite within us. Ethics Descartes hardly touched, but he gave a great impulse to scientific thought, especially in physics, mathematics, and psychology. It is odd to recall that this great observer, thinker, and traveller was a volunteer successively in the Netherlands, Bavarian, Imperial, and French armies. Spinoza (1632-1677) advanced the metaphysical inquiry in a pantheistic direction, writing in a markedly modern manner, and

consistently advocating universal toleration. Germany first caught the infection in the person of Leibnitz (1646-1716), discoverer of the differential calculus, diplomatist, and first President of the Prussian Academy of Science. These were days when there seemed a hope of re-uniting the sects; and scepticism was an exotic east of the Rhine. The Leibnitzian "monadologie" and the conception of matter as rudimentary or sleeping mind have little value or interest to-day.

Two generations later, with the Scottish-Prussian, Immanuel Kant (1724-1804), there is a vast change. The contemporary of Voltaire, Diderot, Hume, and Adam Smith (the *Critique of Pure Reason* appeared in 1781, the year of Schiller's *Robbers*, and Rousseau's *Confessions*), in him Germany paid its debts for ever by producing a higher synthesis of British Empiricism and French Materialism. Where the former found the test of truth in experience, and the latter in logical self-consistency, Kantian idealism placed it in certain axioms of *a priori* necessity and universal validity, larger than and anterior to both particular experience and particular logic; and these data Kant works out in the Transcendental *Æsthetic*, *Analytic*, and *Dialectic*. Faced with the fundamental problem—what is reality?—the English Empiricists had answered that matter is merely an idea in the mind of man, the real an idea in the mind of God, and that knowledge came only through experience. But how do we know that twice two always makes four? Not by experience. The Rationalists replied that, beside experience, we have certain innate ideas. Admitting *a priori* knowledge (for instance, of causality and of elementary mathematical and logical propositions), Kant carried the analysis of the process of knowing much

further. Deepening the old distinction of real and ideal, he found all experience to contain two elements: (1) the object or "thing-in-itself," the Real, 'essentially unknowable, but presenting itself as raw material, as it were, to (2) the subject, our understanding, which has *a priori* the capacity of arranging this presentation in terms of time, space, and causality, so producing the Ideal, our sole knowledge. Liberty is reconciled with freedom by the concept of a "categorical imperative" arising intuitively in the moral nature, and operating through the Practical Reason. The idea of God, or Pure Reason, as the total of reality and perfection, unprovable, intuitive, is held to emerge by a "practical necessity" for the understanding and guidance of life. Kant thus makes conscience the ultimate court of conduct, and vigorously combats every hedonistic or utilitarian ethic.

He was one of the first thinkers to see human history as a continuous evolution under natural law, and that at a time when the tide of Rousseauism was at flood. Here, as more fully in the *Ideen zur Geschichte der Menschheit* (1784) of Kant's early pupil, Herder—the first work definitely treating mankind as an organism evolving in a physical and historical environment—the influence of the past upon the present, an influence always peculiarly powerful in German life, was for the first time philosophically presented; and to this presentation we may date the beginnings of the historical-geographical school to which, in the next two generations, Heeren, Schlosser, Carl Ritter, Niebuhr, Ranke, Mommsen, and Curtius belong. History, in fact, was a good second to metaphysics in keeping alive the intellectual activity which could, at the end of the eighteenth century, and for some time afterwards, find no outlet in political speculation or

agitation ; and from this time onward the laborious collection and editing of historical material has been a distinguishing feature of German scholarship.

That another thought of Kant's has found no such development among later generations of his countrymen is to be attributed to like influences of heredity and environment. Goethe may be said to have been a cosmopolitan by nature, Kant by conviction. Goethe was a child of ancient Greece and modern Italy and Paris. His work as Minister and courtier would have helped a smaller man to a political instinct ; for him, it was a trivial matter beside the grand affair of Culture, tolerable just because, small as was the world of Weimar, it had none of the smallness of nationalism, and nothing of Prussian strenuousness about it. Goethe said he did not know what patriotism meant, and was glad to be without it. Kant, also, with the best of his contemporaries, was a citizen of the world. Both of them would be revolted by the average opinion of Germany or any other great State to-day. But there is an important difference, discernible before the nationalist reaction had set in after the foreign attack upon France of the Revolution. Goethe's essentially poetic nature, his quick sensibility, receptiveness, and *joie de vivre*, his overwhelming interest in the beautiful, the refinements of character and imagination, even more than the conservatism which saw little but madness in the French upheaval, and a long firm of knaves and fools in all majority government, warn us that, with all the marvellous breadth and richness of this unique mind, it is not one from which we must expect any considerable political ideas. He made it a point against German philosophy that "it has no direct relation to life," so that men "cannot perceive what

practical advantage they are to get from it." To which the philosophers might well have replied that it was precisely the reactionary tendencies which Goethe's aristocratic genius favoured that shut them off from practical life.

Immanuel Kant's life, also, was extraordinarily self-centred. He rarely left the town of Königsberg, and never crossed the frontiers of the province. He lectured on geography without having seen a mountain or a valley, and probably without ever looking on the sea, and on art without setting foot in a picture gallery. He never missed a lecture in nine years, and was so pedantically punctual that the town's-folk corrected their watches by his mid-day constitutional. Once he changed his house in order not to be disturbed by a crowing cock which a neighbour refused to dispose of. The growth of some poplars, obstructing a favourite view, so troubled him that he persuaded the owner to cut them down; and he got the governor of the central prison to shut the windows so that he might not hear the convicts' hymn-singing. But, though he carried concentration, isolation, and self-discipline to the last limit, Kant was not inhuman; and he advanced before its time one great political idea to which Goethe's cosmopolitan mind never reached. A witness of the whole reign of Frederick the Great—that is to say, of the two Silesian wars, the Seven Years' War, and the first partition of Poland—and, thereafter, of the first half of the Napoleonic wars, he had borne in not only upon his sentiments, but upon his deepest intelligence, a horror of that primal savagery which, largely abolished in individual relations, is still the final arbitrament of States. Not content with a vague cosmopolitanism, and realizing, though less clearly than

we now can, that true social progress goes on by definite organic stages, he advocated, in *Zum Ewigen Frieden* (1789), the institution of that federation of States which has been actually begun only in our own day; and he left as a still remoter ideal their union in a world-republic where ethics and politics would at last be reconciled in the daily service of mankind. In this noble idea, vitally connected as it is with his interpretation of history, Kant placed himself in line with the rare company of humanist philosophers to whom every year brings new justification; while Goethe's contemptuous dismissal of national sentiment satisfied the dutiful citizen as little as his contemptuous dismissal of democracy satisfied the social reformer.

For the rest, it must be admitted that the immense movement of speculation which Kant started, as to "Erkenntnistheorie," or theory of the nature and conditions of pure knowledge, as distinguished from science or practical knowledge, the absorption of many of the best German minds in the microscopic elaboration of the dialectical method, is not a wholly edifying spectacle. But Nietzsche's scoffs at the "cobweb-spinning" of the "back-door philosophy"—"they have got rid of Christian God, and now think themselves obliged to cling firmer than ever to Christian morality"—point to a certain justification. However industriously mended, the old clothes will fail at last. The time had come for a threefold revolution—economic, political, and intellectual-religious. Philosophy had for long nothing better to say than *laissez-faire* to the first, and hardly more to the second; but on the third it set up new standards and methods of inquiry and education; above all, it opened an indirect road of escape from the sects,

106 A TRAGIC CYCLE OF GERMAN GENIUS

their stagnation and strife, their dogmas and heresy-hunts. France and England hardly needed such a "back-door." Germany, the hearth and home of Biblical piety, emphatically did; and, as Mr. Belfort Bax says,¹ "a great deal of the enthusiasm called forth by Kant may be referred to the belief that he had rehabilitated the old theological morality against the mere negations of the revolutionary writers, and effectually rendered it independent of any theological basis."

After this work of liberation, the break-up of the Transcendental School began. Johann Gottlieb Fichte (1762-1814) tried to bring the movement somewhat nearer to the life of the time, and its painfully concrete problems. He was a keen partizan of the popular cause as against monarchical, aristocratic, and clerical governors; issued a volume intended to "rectify the public judgment on the French Revolution" in 1793; lost his professorship at Jena for heresy in 1799; issued a clarion-call for resistance to Napoleon in 1808; became first rector of the newly-established Berlin University; and died of fever contracted in nursing the wounded in the war of liberation. His robust ethical individualism contributed its one sound note to the subsequent Romantic movement. He anticipated Schopenhauer in emphasizing the element of will in consciousness, Mill in his conception of individuality as implying a reciprocity and union of "mine and his, his and mine," Ruskin in considering property as necessary to the development of personality; and he may be regarded as one of the forerunners of modern Socialism. Schelling (1775-1854) carried the philosophic movement a step further with the idea of a faculty of organization in all matter, which, in the latest stage of evolution, produces

¹ In his admirable *Handbook of the History of Philosophy*.

man ; and, in his description of this " dynamic process " as a struggle toward an equilibrium between forces of universalization and individuation, almost verbally anticipated Herbert Spencer's familiar statement of Evolution in *First Principles*. But in breaking-down conceptual distinctions which Kant had laboured to define, and in his glorification of Art as the highest activity of the mind, Schelling sowed the seed of much Romanticist self-deception.

After this, there is a branching out of the hitherto strong stream of philosophic thought, which gradually shallows, and finally dries up. Hegel (1770-1831) finds Truth to be not something final, but an endless becoming, the ultimate reality to be simply experience or knowledge, which includes thought and feeling, of which subject and object are but " moments " or poles, beyond which we cannot reach to any Absolute or thing-in-itself. To this rarefied concept of a network of thought-relations—the weakness of which is that everything perceptually real, especially personality, is apt to slip through and disappear, and that the slow method of scientific verification is depreciated—Hegel thought it necessary to add a new " categorical imperative " of religious faith and social devotion which brought idealism into the direct service of the Prussian State. It is characteristic of the dialectical method that it lends itself to casuistry and the befogging of simple, practical issues. The time had come for a theory of social obligation that would supplant Rousseauism ; and it was almost inevitable that, in the reaction after Waterloo, any evolutionary doctrine should be given an authoritarian twist.¹

¹ Herr M. Beer, in his notable work of research, *Geschichte des Britischen Sozialismus*, 1912, attributes to Edmund Burke a considerable influence upon German thought.

But Hegel's social doctrine has been variously interpreted even by Hegelians. Thus, according to Friedrich Engels, it only meant that the Prussian State was rational so long as it was necessary, that Prussians got the government they deserved. Mr. Belfort Bax is less lenient: "In his younger days, Hegel had subscribed to the revolutionary views of Rousseau and of Fichte; but at that time he had no expectations of patronage from the Prussian Government. For the official philosopher of the great bureaucratic system which centred in Berlin—a system the perfection of whose wisdom had shown itself in the choice of its philosophic representative—the State as therein embodied could hardly fail to express the highest incarnation of the Reason. The extent of Hegel's adoration of authority, for its own sake, will be estimated when we say that he professed to regard marriage as more moral when arranged by parents than when dictated by the inclination of 'parties' themselves; that, like Schelling, he was prepared to apostrophise the Kaiser as the political 'soul of the world'; that he was the sworn defender (and this not on grounds of antiquarianism or expediency, but of principle) of monopolies and closed corporations." Such were the first-fruits of an ethical-political theory the exact reverse of that prevailing at the time—a theory making individual effort and virtue absolutely subordinate to a "general will" which practically meant the legal, institutional, and customary morals of the society in which the individual happened to live. Hegel gave a great stimulus to the study of the historical development of human thought and society. But the glorification of Prussian bureaucracy and Protestant clericalism, to which his teaching led, especially after the revolution of 1830, while it filled the schools, and scored

a great triumph in the establishment under Bismarck of a bastard State Socialism, inevitably provoked a movement of revolt.

This took three forms. There arose out of the Hegelian Left wing, in the first place, the movement of Biblical criticism and free religious speculation known as the Tübingen School, led by Strauss, Feuerbach, and Bauer, whose work has been carried further in recent years by Wellhausen, Pfleiderer, and Harnack. In the second place, Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, while satirising these new Reformers, laid the basis of a purely proletarian and democratic Socialism; the Russian revolutionists and Panslavists of the time, like Herzen and Aksakoff, were also relations of the Hegelian Left.

Of all these men, it is Marx (1818-83), the political outcast, who has affected the largest number of minds both within and beyond the Fatherland. Son of a Christianised Jew of Treves in the Rhineland, happy in nothing so much as his wife and children, a life of storm and struggle could not thwart the will and energy with which he combatted the older Utopian or conspirative Socialism, and set the workmen to educate and organize themselves in preparation for a time when, in the regular course of evolution, power would fall to them.

Marx was matriculating at Berlin (1836) and graduating as doctor of philosophy at Jena (1841) at the critical moment when speculative philosophy was giving place as the favourite field of study to law, history, and science. He became one of the "Young Hegelians," or Philosophic Radicals, led by Feuerbach and Bruno Bauer; and all that he afterwards suffered in thirty-five years of exile did not fundamentally alter the lessons thus early learned. While British manufacturers were reading

110 A TRAGIC CYCLE OF GERMAN GENIUS

between the lines of Darwin a gospel of ultra-individualism, Marx was teaching the workmen of the Continent that the inexorable course of economic evolution would bring the State into their hands. The *Communist Manifesto* of 1848 and *Das Kapital* (vol. 1, 1867) are the foundation-stones of modern Socialism.

Thirdly, Arthur Schopenhauer (1788-1860), in opposition to the evolutionist optimism of the post-Kantians and the mysticism of the Romantic School, developed, with stark vigour of thought and some bad-temper as well as conceit in controversy, the idea of an essential misery in the will-to-live—which (not thought, or soul) is the moving power of nature—with the implication of asceticism, the denial of the will-to-live, as the logic of intelligent being: "Lasting, unfading satisfaction, no desired object of the will can afford; it is like the alms thrown to the beggar, which prolong his life for the day, only to postpone his suffering to the morrow. So long as we are the subject of will, lasting happiness or rest will never be our lot."¹ The positive thing is, therefore, not pleasure, but pain. Æsthetic contemplation assuages this painful strife; but it can only be fully extinguished by the extinction of desire, the return to nothingness. Suicide does not solve the problem, because it does not represent the negation of will.

Three connected lines of thought may be mentioned, and then German philosophy ceases to present any very original features, and merges into the general body of contemporary western thought. Max Stirner's individualist anarchism has some interest as a paradoxical protest against the extremer State Socialism, and for its influence,

¹ *Welt als Wille und Vorstellung*, vol. I.

PHILOSOPHY, FROM KANT TO NIETZSCHE III.

along with Bakunin's Communism, upon the earlier revolutionary movement in Russia. Eduard von Hartmann, affecting to unite thought and will as basic reality, to reconcile Hegel and Schopenhauer, reaches substantially the same point as the latter when he discovers the end and aim of conscious life to be not happiness, but the conquest of the will, with its heritage of pain, by the intelligence, which, once supreme, will lead the race to extinguish itself. Finally, Friedrich Nietzsche (1844-1900) proclaimed the Super-Man as the single laudable result of an evolution which is an endless recurrence. This brave and brilliant, but unbalanced and unsystematic mind seized with glee upon the contradiction that lay upon the surface of moral glosses on the "struggle for existence" of Darwin, Weissmann, and Haeckel. He would take the bull by the horns, if none else, dare. Physiology is the criterion of human values. Morality, the slave-morality of our time, is "the most fatal kind of ignorance"; fullness of life, of self-expression—that is the sole true morality. The "free spirit" of the "will-to-power" is alone worthy of consideration. Decadence is the enemy; and decadence marks all the ideals of the age—above all, Christian morality, nearest of all Wagner and Schopenhauer. "When one has learned to discern the symptoms of decline, one also understands morality; one understands what conceals itself under its holiest names and valuation-formulæ, namely impoverished life, desire for the end, great lassitude. Morality negatives life."¹ Wagner first attracts, then becomes specially hateful to him. "Someone always wants to be saved in Wagner's works. Who was it but Wagner taught us

¹ Introduction to *The Case of Wagner*.

that innocence has a preference for saving interesting sinners (the case in *Tannhauser*)? Or that even the Wandering Jew will be saved, will become settled, if he marries (the case in the *Flying Dutchman*)? Or that corrupt old women prefer to be saved by chaste youths (the case of *Kundry* in *Parsifal*)? Or that young hysterics like best to be saved by their doctor (the case of *Lohengrin*)? Or that handsome girls like best to be saved by a cavalier who is a Wagnerian (the case in the *Master-singers*)? Or that even married women are willingly saved by a cavalier (the case of *Isolde*)? "In all this he finds a peculiarly German viciousness. "Goethe's fate in moralic-acid, old-maidenish Germany is known. He was always a scandal to the Germans; he has had honest admirers only among Jewesses. Schiller, 'noble' Schiller, who blustered round their ears with high-flown phrases, he was according to their taste . . . All the little Courts, every sort of 'Wartburg' in Germany, crossed themselves before Goethe, before the 'unclean spirit' in Goethe. Wagner has set this history to music. He *saves* Goethe . . . a prayer saves him, a cultured maiden *draws him upward*." So Wagner is "the Cagliostro of modernism," mixing in his art "the three great stimulants of the exhausted: brutality, artifice, and innocence (idiocy)." He corresponds to the advent of the Empire, "the classical age of war," and provides a consequent "definition of Germanics—obedience and long legs." Schopenhauer, Heine, Nietzsche—"the Germans have no fingers for us, only claws." "The Germans are bored with intellect nowadays, they mistrust it, politics swallow up all seriousness for really intellectual matters. 'Deutschland, Deutschland über alles,' I fear that has been the end of German philosophy . . . It is asked:

have you even a single intellect to point to that counts in Europe, as your Goethe, Hegel, Heine, and Schopenhauer counted? There is no end of astonishment that there is no longer a single German philosopher.”¹

Nietzsche, because his later years were destroyed by insanity, has been often misinterpreted, even—because he was first of all a poet and a rebel—maligned. Regarded as a symptom, he has the highest significance for our subject. While he was writing, Bismarck and William I were giving the world a very different interpretation of the doctrine of triumphant energy; and, where he had one disciple, they had thousands of armed crusaders at command. There is some divine food in the doctrine of energy; but it is food for the thinking few, poison for the unthinking many. Everywhere, at that time, there was a revulsion from the transcendental idealisms and romanticisms which had borne so little practical fruit. Political revolt had rather miserably failed; economic revolt was for the far future. But, as the man in the street says when his feelings outrun his brain, “something must be done”; and the example of the nationality movement in other lands was easily confused with Prussian pretensions. Man is a social animal; while an appeal to personal energy, without any very definite objective, merely disturbs his complacency, let but the circumstances be favourable, let the appeal to the ancient tribal vanities be skilfully made, let the objective, however carnal, be clear to the common intelligence, and your man in the street will sacrifice wife and children, his worldly goods and even his life, to follow the call of

¹ *What the Germans Lack*, in vol. II of Mr. Common's English edition of Nietzsche's collected works. There is now a complete translation, in eighteen volumes, published by T. N. Foulis.

114 A TRAGIC CYCLE OF GERMAN GENIUS

the drum. So Germany chants her war-songs ; and pale philosophy flies to other lands, to reappear in the Pragmatism of a William James—refuge of fine, brave, disillusioned and sceptical, yet anxiously ethical spirits, in a dollar-ridden society—or the “Creative Evolution” of the Parisian Jew, Henri Bergson ; there and elsewhere to seek, between an idealism no longer adequate and a materialism no longer fruitful, a conception of the whole that, while honouring reason to the full, will yet recognize the greater majesty of the universal life-impulse of which reason is a recent product.

In one of his brilliant essays,¹ Heine has a happy image of the two lands of his affection. The French of the Revolution, “engrossed with real occupations,” beseech the Germans of the time “to sleep and dream in their stead.” “Yes, of a truth we dreamed, in our German fashion ; that is to say, we philosophised—not, indeed, over the truth of things which touched us most closely, but over the reality of things in and for themselves ; the ultimate reason of things, and similar metaphysical and transcendental dreams. Therein, at times, we were disturbed by the horrible uproar made by our western neighbours, a highly inconvenient noise, for not unseldom the French musket balls whistled through our philosophical system, and carried away whole strips of it.” In this German Dream-Revolution, “Kant was our Robespierre. Thereafter came Fichte, the Napoleon of Philosophy . . . The Counter-Revolution broke out ; and, under Schelling, the past, with its traditional interests, was once more recognized, even indemnified. Then, in the new Restoration, the philosophy of nature, there reigned the greyheaded Emigrés who had always intrigued against

¹ *The Old Régime*, written in 1831.

the sovereignty of pure reason and of idea—mysticism, pietism, Jesuitism, legitimacy, romanticism, teutomania, sentimentality!" Alas! Counter-Revolutions are not to be conjured away by any metaphysical ingenuity. Heine did not live to see either the ripening of the reality in Republican France, or the bitter end of the dream of philosophic Germany in the pessimism and materialism of the victorious Hohenzollern Empire. Had he done so, he would yet not have been tempted, nor will we, to doubt the revolutionary power of thought. Like himself, his friend Marx died in exile; yet in any German general election to-day a full half of the votes are cast for that heretical name. If France reached a higher plane of liberty, it was because the Bourbons were a trifle beside the difficulties that modern Germany, prey of a hundred-fold disruption and obscurantism, has had to overcome. If England became the "Mother of Parliaments," the exponent of evolution in political and social life, as well as in science and philosophy, it is, ultimately, not because of any innate superiority of the British nature, but because her insular position has, since 1745, protected her from internal warfare, and for a much longer period has set her full in the current of modern forces, so that feudalism and clericalism withered early, and no speculation could get far away from the bracing winds of practical interest.

II. LITERATURE, FROM LESSING TO HAUPTMANN

There is in letters, also, a sudden efflorescence in the latter half of the eighteenth century, and thenceforward

116 A TRAGIC CYCLE OF GERMAN GENIUS

a succession of phases, the academic explanation of which is very inadequate. I take it for granted that these phenomena cannot be passed over without an attempt to discover their larger relations. The sort of history which is limited to a chronological narrative of striking events and a presentation of great characters, without even a guess at their pedigree and meaning, is *Hamlet* without the Prince; it is a mere chronicle of accidents, and cannot justify itself to a generation of readers familiarized with the conception of a power, nay a necessity, of evolution in all living things. The essential business of history is not the record but the interpretation of facts; and it is no reply to this categorical imperative, but a feeble evasion, to say that sound interpretations are hard to come by. The later German school, in glorifying research, has infected us with the microbe of detail; a reaction to the older philosophic utilitarian method is overdue. If we can do no more, we can at least follow the Socratic example, and ask questions.

Goethe is the least German of the great German writers; Goethe is "the fixed pole about which German thought has gravitated and turned for a century"; are these contradictory propositions, and, if not, how are they to be reconciled? If we agree that literatures do not propagate and transform themselves, but reflect intellectual changes, which are largely motived by social changes, where shall we find the deeper causes of the movement from classicism to romanticism, and thence to realism? Why should there be so marked a contrast between the straightforward, powerful development of British letters from Swift and Pope to Scott and Wordsworth, or of French letters from Montesquieu, Voltaire, and Saint-Simon, through Rousseau, to Chateaubriand and Hugo, and the

immature and erratic, the seemingly aimless and certainly ineffectual fumbblings of the German intelligence of the same period? We are so much accustomed to regard literature, especially in the crucial periods of Anglo-Saxon history, as an expression of the national spirit, and, at the same time, an effectual influence upon it, that we are at first sight perplexed by the spectacle of a generation of writers, including one supreme genius and many considerable talents, producing with ceaseless activity quantities of dramas, poems, novels, and treatises; raising clouds of controversial dust in the effort to aggrandize coteries into movements; and yet, when not positively indifferent to, exercising but the slightest influence upon, the world-shaking drama that was being enacted around them—the drama of the Revolution, the Napoleonic Tyranny, and the Counter-Revolution.

There is something childlike in Goethe's admiration for Napoleon. What can the apostle of the Good, the True, and the Beautiful have to do in the galère of the arch-brigand? He looks back upon the eve of the Revolution as "the good time when Merck¹ and I were young, and German literature was yet a clean slate on which one hoped to write rare things." Not a very clean slate, perhaps, but rather scribbled over with dead native traditions and half-assimilated French and English fashions. Anyway, the need for some strong rallying voice was patent. The young Army doctor, Schiller, angered by persecution, worked the stage thunder bravely in *Die Räuber* (1781). "The law has degraded to the

¹ Councillor in the War Department at Darmstadt in 1771; as a discontented and satirical youth he gave Goethe some of the traits of his Mephistopheles. The citation is from Eckermann's *Conversations*, and is dated 1829.

crawl of a snail what would have been the flight of an eagle. The law has never yet formed a great man, but freedom has bred giants. Put men like me " (the freebooter Moor) " in front of an army, and from Germany shall grow a Republic beside which Rome and Sparta were nunneries." Precious little the Dukes and Margraves care for stage thunder ! The next year Schiller had to fly from the petty tyrant of Württemberg, whose castle was the prison of at least one of his friends. It is a passing vision, that of the German Republic ; and we presently find Schiller settled down under Dukely patronage at Weimar with Goethe, who, for his part, has already risen above such mundane heresies, and leaves the time-being to take care of itself.

They had another way in France. The scepticism of the Encyclopædists, the mordant wit, the kindly and buoyant materialism of Voltaire and Diderot, pointed by Rousseau's passion for individual right, were not simply recreating a national literature, but were breaking down, one after another, all the Bastilles of the ancient régime. They tower, these dauntless men, over two generations of German imitators, as the Alps tower over the high pastures. Their example, even, yielded less practical fruit in Germany than in further lands. The feverish outburst of " Sturm und Drang " is incomprehensible except as a morbid symptom ; it indicates a complete puzzlement as to the future as clearly as discontent with the past. All over the west, in the pre-Revolution decade, there was a seething of emotion, a heat of expectancy ; the temper of cold scorn was giving place to a passionate and introspective sentimentalism. But while Richardson's *Pamela* or Rousseau's *Nouvelle Héloïse* struck only one note, albeit a powerful one,

in a rich chorus of influences, the success of *Werther* (1774) rather marked the ravages of a *malaise* in the over-susceptible German nature, always prone to mistake shadow for substance. In the healthy vigour and common-sense which he gave to a supreme social task, Lessing had no successor ; the ceaseless search for reality along the narrow road between pedantry and mysticism that make him a type of the rational investigator and liberator seem to have gone for naught. It was only in his wild youth that Goethe swayed to the tide of his time, between the two extremes of Romanticism, the sentimental and the barbaric. In the record of his maturity, there is something superhuman, if not inhuman. He did immortal work for mankind ; it is in no narrow spirit that we may ask whether he did anything comparable for Germany ; whether, in fact, he was German in any but this negative sense, that he exhibited with all the power of genius the non-existence of Germany. For, between the transcendental adventures of *Faust* and the pettifogging realities of Weimar there is a wide gulf, and in that gulf lay the neglected destinies of the German people.

In a letter stating his conception of historical writing, Schiller says : " It is a poor little aim to write for one nation ; a philosophic spirit cannot tolerate such limits, cannot bound its views to a form of human nature so arbitrary, fluctuating, accidental. The most powerful nation is but a fragment ; and thinking minds will not grow warm on its account, except in so far as this nation or its fortunes have been influential on the progress of the species." Greater men than Schiller, even, have held the first duty to be the nearest ; and Germany has paid dearly for the neglect of this truth. " The calm

kindliness with which enlightened men of the period of Kant and the poetic court of Weimar regarded the people was unaccompanied," says Freytag, "by the slightest suspicion that the pith of German national strength must be sought in this despised and ruined class, that the condition of things under which he himself, the author, lived was hollow, barbarous, and insecure." If Hegel was able to represent obedience to a Hohenzollern State as a proper return of the "general will" from dreams to facts, it was because literature had failed to point the way to a better reality. Except by a few aristocrats, and by his very conservative Excellency, Geheimrath von Goethe, the Revolution had been hailed throughout non-official Germany as the glorious child of Voltaire and Rousseau. But east of the Rhine the idea never translated itself into action. So Napoleon, as little understood as expected, found the way of conquest easy. While Princes and Emigrés conspired to invite his retort discourteous, the thinkers dreamed, and continued to dream. Read in conjunction with these terrific events, the literary movement, with all its masterpieces, seems a thin-blooded, unreal thing. In real life the nobles are mostly fools—on the stage and in the novel, until *William Tell* (1804), they are mostly heroes (Goethe's *Götz*, *Egmont*, and *Tasso*, Schiller's *Don Carlos*, *Wallenstein*, and *Mary Stuart*, and a host of others). The high Society of the petty German States habitually talked French; save for a few eccentric patrons, what should it care for German letters? Every prudential consideration warned the educated class to let politics alone. It is not only that patriotism, till Schiller and Fichte turned their coats, was at a discount; the note of manliness is missing.

Our Franco-German comparison will be more helpful if it be pushed a step further. In France, literature was an effective force because it had a nationality behind it. It was superlatively effective because the task of the moment was rather to destroy than to create, to break the shackles that hampered a people long conscious of its unity and proud of its place in the sun—to particularize, not to unify. There was an unquestioned centre of the whole national life—Paris; to its clubs and salons, its university and stage, the young spirits of the nation gravitated, thence all characteristic influences radiated. The forces of reform and reaction alike were centralized; and the conflict developed with a logical clearness that challenged the simplest mind to stand forth on one side or the other. All these conditions were reversed in Germany. There the need was not to pull down, but to build up; and the infection of French scepticism had rather aggravated the difficulty of this historic task. Never was the cynical adage *Divide et impera* so largely illustrated. Few men cherish ideals that, for their own generation, are manifestly hopeless. The mere ideal of German unity, therefore, had died out. The social problem seemed insoluble. As, before feminism had become possible, Tennyson made his New Woman the Princess of a sort of mediæval Holloway College, so the greatest German of the Revolutionary epoch turned his back upon the vulgar mass, and set up an aristocratic monastery which he called Culture. Women, it is true, played a large part in this retreat, and all the windows stood open to the sun and the airs of heaven; but it was a retreat, half Court, half monastery, none the less.

When the wise man cannot mould the world, he withdraws into himself, and there makes a world of sober joy.

As individual justification, this may stand, but it makes a 'lame gospel. "What is it," asks Wilhelm Meister,¹ "that keeps men in continual discontent and agitation? It is that they cannot make realities correspond with their conceptions; that enjoyment steals away from among their hands, that the wished-for comes too late, and nothing reached and acquired produces on the heart the effect which their longing for it at a distance led them to anticipate. Now, fate has exalted the poet; above all this, as if he were a god. He views the conflicting tumult of the passions; sees families and kingdoms raging in aimless commotion . . . How! thou would'st have him descend from his height to some paltry occupation? He who is fashioned like the bird to hover round the world . . . he ought also to work at the plough like an ox; like a dog to train himself to the harness and draught; or, perhaps, tied up in a chain, guard a farmyard by his barking!" Werner, surprised at this tirade, comments: "All true, if men were but made like birds, and, though they neither spun nor weaved, could yet spend peaceful days in perpetual enjoyment." "Poets have lived so," Wilhelm replies, "in times when true nobleness was better revered; and so should they ever live. Sufficiently provided for within, they had need of little from without; the gift of communicating lofty emotions and glorious images to men, in melodies and words that charmed the ear, of old enraptured the world. At the courts of kings, at the tables of the great, beneath the windows of the fair, the sound of them was heard. The hero listened to their songs; and the conqueror of the earth did

¹ *Meister's Apprenticeship*. Bk. II, chap. ii. Carlyle's translation.

reverence to a poet"—for all the world like Napoleon, with his "Voilà un homme!" when he met Goethe at Erfurt! It is the troubadour's ideal revised up to the late eighteenth century. Life exists for poetry (no writer has so persistently served up his own and his friend's experiences in literary form as Goethe), not poetry for life.

Sir John Seeley¹ rightly emphasized the fact that the length of Goethe's life (1749-1832) created an "illusion which makes him seem to us more modern than he is." He wrote "the most successful book of the year which witnessed the death of Goldsmith," and "finished a great and imposing poetical work three years after Lord Tennyson's name came before the public." But it is to the earlier period that he belongs. He lived much with his youthful memories—it was so that *Faust* and *Wilhelm Meister* grew over a long period of years. Even in his later works, "with the exception of *Wilhelm Meister's Wanderjahre*, the peculiar spirit of the nineteenth century is studiously excluded, and the train of thought is imperturbably pursued which would have been natural to us all if no French Revolution and no nationality movement had occurred to alter the aspect of everything." Is the *Wanderjahre* (1821, and 1829), an exception? The Poet-Courtier has been disturbed; the Wandering Minstrel is now his ideal, that is all—a variation natural to a day when the old patrons have passed away, and the world seems to have fallen into the hands of vulgar upstarts. The Cosmopolitans are all children of Ulysses. A Tolstoy fitly dies at a wayside railway station. Goethe has something of this itch. At the end, it seems to him that "the moving life"

¹ *Goethe*, chs. iv and v, 1884.

is best. "The ablest man is also the man who moves the oftenest." Is this cold comfort for the homeless? "Everywhere endeavour to be useful, everywhere you are at home. . . . Let a man learn, we say, to figure himself as without external relation; let him seek consistency not in circumstances, but in himself; there will he find it; there let him cherish and nourish it." Meanwhile, he had better "honour every species of religious worship" and "respect all forms of government."¹

Goethe's life affords abundant material for a commentary upon this last word of the Weimarian evangel. The Frankfurt lawyer's son is the favourite of fortune; he knows nothing of the persecution, poverty, and disease that pursued Schiller and so many of his contemporaries. Whether he inherits his hot blood from his mother is uncertain; from his grim father he gets a sense of the advantage of State patronage, and of the profit and pleasure of hard, systematic study. In his boyhood, the Seven Years' War was in progress, and the French troops established themselves in Frankfurt. Already a worshipper of Frederick the Great, and an adept at languages, he was now introduced by a French officer, quartered in his father's house, to some of the masterpieces of the French stage. In 1764 he witnessed in Frankfurt the coronation of the Archduke Joseph as "King of the Romans," and met his first "Gretchen." In 1765 he moved to Leipzig for his legal course; here Kätchen Schönkopf inspired his first verse, and at the cost of an illness he laid up experience for the tavern scene in *Faust*. At Strassburg, in 1770, Herder's influence began to develop a realistic bent in his mind, and turned his attention to ancient and mediæval poetry. After sundry lesser romances,

¹ End of the last chapter of *Meister's Travels*.

the daughter of the pastor of Sesenheim, Friederike Brion, set his lyrical faculty a-going to serious purpose. Two years later, the tragedy of another gifted and amorous youth, named Jerusalem, suggested *Werther*, which made Goethe at twenty-five a public figure. At Wetzlar, in 1772, he became infatuated with Charlotte Buff; in 1774, after the appearance of *Götz*, he was interested in Maximiliane Brentano; and in 1775 he was nearly married to Elizabeth Schönmann, daughter of a wealthy Frankfurt banker, the "Lili" of various poems. After a tour in Switzerland, he came to Weimar on the invitation of Duke Karl August; and this, henceforth, was his home. Wieland was already there, pensioner of the Dowager Duchess Amalia; Herder followed Goethe in 1776, and Schiller and Humboldt came later.

It seems to have been Carlyle who first set afloat the absurd description of Saxony as the German Attica, and Weimar as its Athens.¹ The condition of Germany was the most extreme antithesis of that of Hellas in its prime; and there is nothing in common between Athens and Weimar except that, for a short time, the latter place was distinguished as the abode of a small but powerful literary group. It was one among a number; there was a Göttinger Bund and a Swabian school, as there had been a Halle school, and were to be a Munich group and a Heidelberg group. In the large cities, the growth of circles of writers was a natural feature of social life; and if these schools (generally attached to a University) chiefly advertized themselves by controversy, rose and

¹ Lord Haldane once wrote—but it is a good many years since: "The name of the little territory which encloses Weimar and Jena stirs the imagination of thousands of our youth of both sexes, even as the name of Jerusalem moved the hearts of men in the centuries behind us"!

fell as they attracted the ablest men and voiced the latest nuance of feeling, and, in brief, cultivated the particularism which made German unity so difficult to achieve, they at least bore witness to a rich variety of intelligence in touch with every day duty. Weimar was a thoroughly artificial coterie, consisting of two Gallicized sovereigns, ambitious to immortalize themselves by copying Frederick the Great, as Frederick had copied Louis; the usual hangers-on of a petty Court, including the sportive and those of easy virtue; the literary pensioners, and their more distinguished lady friends; a few servile tradesfolk; and the *canaille* who must do the daily labour of all the others. We have already seen that the Duchy—afterwards the Grand Duchy—of Saxe-Weimar-Eisenach consists of three fragments situated between Prussian Saxony, the Kingdom of Saxony, and Bavaria, and that, to-day, its total population is no larger than that of a single London borough. When Goethe gave them fame, the whole of Karl August's lands had only 93,360 inhabitants, and his army numbered 310 men. Weimar, the capital, was a large village of 6,265 souls, most of whom lived in low-thatched cottages on the outskirts, and, doubtless, took little satisfaction in the Olympian personages for whom they had to hew wood and draw water.¹ A capital in the very centre

¹ "In 1790, just when Goethe's *Torquato Tasso* made its first appearance in the refined Saxon Court, the peasants of Meissen rose against the landowners because they had so immoderately increased the service that their villeins seldom had a day free from their own work. Again, in 1799, when Schiller's *Wallenstein* was exciting the enthusiasm of the bellicose nobles of Berlin, Frederick William III was obliged to issue a Cabinet order enjoining his nobility not to lay claim to the soccage of the peasants more than three days a week, and to treat their people with equity." Freytag: *Pictures*, 2nd series I, p. 49.

of Germany, the place was so isolated that special messengers had to be sent twice a week to intercept the Leipzig-Erfurt post; and important news from Berlin might take a week in coming. There were eight inns, two of them tolerable. The narrow streets were ill-lighted and paved. The four gates by which the old town wall was broken were closed at 6 p.m. in winter, and 9.30 p.m. in summer, after which hours foot-passengers, except officials, could only get in or out by paying a tax of a halfpenny, and horsemen three halfpence.

Amalia of Brunswick, a robust and still young woman, standing midway between the two extremes of the Romantic cult, amused herself with all the arts, and did her best to make Weimar a little Versailles, with amendments suggested by the Vienna of the liberal Emperor, Joseph II. When Karl August succeeded, in 1775, the Dowager-Duchess set up a minor Court at Tiefurt, half-an-hour's walk from Weimar; and there, on a sunny afternoon, you might see old Wieland and young Goethe, Herder, and Schiller, the centre of a party *à la Watteau*, discussing the latest theories under the trees of the park to the accompaniment of the Royal band. Karl August was something of a bull in this Dresden china-shop; a vast eater and drinker, a lover of dogs and horses, a mighty hunter. For some time the poet took a full share in the Duke's gross revels. He had a younger brother, the cause of much anxiety; once Goethe had to pack off to Paris a lady with whom the young prince had eloped. Fêtes, masquerades, hunting, skating, and gaming parties pass the time, but they also devour the revenue; and Goethe, who has been advanced from Councillor of Legation, Privy Councillor, Commissioner of Mines, and President of the Chamber, to Prime Minister has to com-

plain. The Duke of this toy monarchy must have his Grand Court Marshall and Grand Court Mistress, his first Gentlemen of the Chamber, his Grand Equerry, his grand huntsmen, and masters of forests and waters, a Court Marshall, thirteen chamberlains, fifteen gentlemen and pages, four valets, a French *chef*, and twenty-two cooks. The Duchess, the young Prince and Princess, and the Dowager have each their lesser following. Then there is a Council of five for the whole State, a lesser Council each for Weimar and Eisenach, a Supreme Court of Justice at Jena, a General for the army of 310 men, and a Diplomatic Corps of fifteen persons.¹ It has been thought that "the distance which from this time separated Goethe from his contemporaries was mainly due to the balance of character which political responsibility gave him."² The "political responsibilities" which thus separated the greatest of Germans from his countrymen included the management of the Weimar theatre, a task rendered the more difficult, and finally impossible, by the opposition of the Duke's latest mistress. The new building, opened in 1784, held nearly 600 persons, and was served by a stock company a dozen strong. There was a subsidiary Court Theatre at Lauchstaedt, with room for 320 spectators, who were mostly Jena students. Goethe seems to have taken immense pains in coaching the actors in diction, declamation, and deportment.

¹ I owe some of the above facts to A. Bossert (*Essais sur la Littérature Allemande*, 2 vols, 1905 and 1910), who quotes from Burkhardt, *Aus Weimars Kulturgeschichte*; Beaulieu-Marconnay, *Anna Amalia, Karl August, und der Minister von Fritsch*; Julius Wahle, *Das Weimarer Hoftheater unter Goethes Leitung*, etc.

² Prof. J. G. Robertson's excellent *History of German Literature*, p. 349.

Sometimes he had to punish them, or to arbitrate in their matrimonial quarrels. "In general," he writes, "the Commission need not concern itself with the private affairs of the company. But if an actor abuses his wife and disfigures her, and if she has to appear in the evening in a lover's rôle, the theatre is concerned."

There are, indeed, other "political responsibilities" in the "Athens of Saxony," increasingly laborious tasks of administration of mines, roads, finances, drainage. Goethe varies them with more love affairs—Frau von Stein, the most influential and purest of all; Christiane Vulpius, with whom he lived for eighteen years before he married her; Minna Hertzlich; Marianne von Willemer; and finally (at the age of 73) Ulrike von Levetzow. He enjoys a long friendship with Schiller, an ever-closer familiarity with Nature, and a series of travels—a second Swiss journey (1779), a visit of nearly two years to Italy (1786-8)—in every way the summit of his life; goes through the disastrous Valmy campaign (1792), and pays a third visit to Switzerland (1797). His "*Quorum pars magna fui*" is the oddest of comments on Valmy. It is nothing to him—a picnic ending in acute discomfort. The sight of the Alps, the thought of Greece, affected him more than the lot of the labouring mass of his fellow men. The Revolution he frankly abominated; and, although he tried all things and reconciled many apparent opposites in his own vast nature, he could never put his heart into a patriotic song. He makes discoveries in anatomy, botany, and geology; in politics, he is a child beside his carnal Duke, and runs away to Italy to escape from the problems with which the outer world is seething. Thereafter there is less of German in him than ever, and Weimar is no more than Tasso's Court platform. To the greatest

dramatist of the time the greatest drama of the time meant nothing. With a passing flattery, Napoleon secured him from any sympathy with the movement of national liberation. He met Beethoven, but could not understand his unbending mind. Toward the end, he was more friendly with those who had made an "ism" out of "Werther." Their world was never his; but the common needs of common men had become clamant. For if, as we have seen, the eagle cannot ever be on the wing, still and by far less can we others live in the high solitudes. Old Merlin died alone, the last of his line, the last of an age, with the nobly symbolic farewell upon his lips, "Let there be more light!"

After frosty Königsberg, and sunny Weimar—the long debauch of Romanticism. It is dead and gone, and we may to-day speak plain truth about it without offence. Not that this *olla podrida* was devoid of good elements; the olden lyrical spirit and sincere piety of the Teuton folk well up into it, along with faint first stirrings of individualistic revolt and national self-consciousness. The Heidelberg "Wunderhorn," the Grimms' fairy tales, Uhland's ballads, Eichendorff's nature poems, a hundred glorifications of the village home, wanderlieder, reisebilder, and some of the songs of the "War of Liberation"—in these, literature was getting down to the popular basis without which there is no lasting power. There was much of value in the method of interpretative criticism introduced by the Schlegels; August Wilhelm's translations of Shakespeare, Dante, and Cervantes constituted a prime service; and we can only now scorn the historical tales of Alexis and Zschokke because the sole art-form in the technique of which great progress has been made

during the last generation happens to be novel. Moderation, proportion, equanimity are unquestionable virtues until the vital spirit leaves them. Then there is something to be said for the spirit of adventure and innovation. But what of the neo-mediæval *Schwarmerei* and *Träumerei*, with its sham chivalry and sham-mysticism, its play-erotics and play-æsthetics, its maudlin rhetoric and stage machinery of doom curses, devil's elixirs, poisoned daggers, clanking chains, castles by the sea, its

Mondbeglänzte Zaubernacht . . .
Wundervolle Märchenwelt

its Undines, mandrakes, Doppelgänger, and death-horses, its pseudo-oriental cult of resignation, its muling and puking, yearning and posturing? The fever of Romanticism passed over Europe as far as the St. Petersburg of Pushkin and Lermantoff. Why did Germany suffer the most serious attack?

Heine's account of the matter (in his papers on "The Romantic Movement," "De l'Allemagne depuis Luther," and the "Confessions") is suggestive, though inadequate. Belonging to the generation after Goethe and Schiller (he was born in 1799, and died in 1856), viewing the field as "the last poet of the old German lyric school," from a now honoured exile, he, if any, should understand the strange phenomena we have just glanced at—the mysterious impotence of German genius, the divorce of the greatest thinkers from the greatest of social affairs, the epidemic of sentimentalism. The Romantic ideal, according to Heine, was "nothing else than the re-awakening of the poetry of the Middle Ages." After the degradation of the ancient world, "a hunger cure, such as Christianity, was necessary." "The ruddy barbarians became spiritualized." In the *Nibelungenlied* and other early

mediæval hero-tales, the Pagan and Christian spirits wrestled for mastery. Christianity won; and its art blossomed into a manifold symbol of divinity. But this inspiration died into priestdom. Then the Renaissance brought a fresh breeze of life from the ancient Greek world. France captured the new spirit; and "we Germans modelled our clumsy temple of art after the be-powdered Olympus of Versailles." Lessing, for whom Heine can find no words of praise too strong, was "the literary Arminius who emancipated our theatre from that foreign rule." Despite poverty and misery—"a curse which rests on almost all the great minds of Germany, and which probably will only be overcome by political emancipation"—Lessing, pursuing art, archæology, theology, history, poetry, and dramatic criticism, applied to all the same tests of reason and social progress. He was "the successor of Luther," and the father of modern German literature.

But Lessing died in the year of the appearance of Kant's *Critique* (1781); and mediocrity and imitations continued, until, in the last years of the century, the younger Schlegels founded the Romantic School, with Jena, hard by Weimar, for its capital. Germany was to be resurrected by a return to the simple poetic spirit of the mediæval north. "It was claimed that we Germans, with our *Gemüth*, a word for which the French language"—and, Heine might have added, the English—"has no equivalent, have been able to form a more profound conception of Christianity than other nations. Frederick Schlegel and his friend, Joseph Görres, rummaged among the ancient Rhine cities for the remains of old German pictures and statuary, which were superstitiously worshipped as holy relics . . . A French madness

falls far short of a German lunacy in violence. for in the latter, as Polonius would say, there is method. With a pedantry unequalled, with an intense conscientiousness, with a profundity of which a superficial French fool can form no conception, this German folly was pursued. The political condition of Germany was particularly favourable to those Christian old-German tendencies. 'Need teaches prayer,' says the proverb, and, truly, never was the need greater in Germany. Hence the masses were more than ever inclined to prayer, to religion. And more, even, than the sorrowful condition to which the country was reduced through war and foreign rule, did the mournful spectacle of their vanquished princes, creeping at the feet of Napoleon, afflict and grieve the Germans."

Here was the princely opportunity. The grandest of Grand Dukes and the most remarkable of Margraves will drop the French tongue and Comédie Française manners when their revenues depend upon it. "Even the most exalted personages now spoke of a German nationality, a common Fatherland, a union of the Christian-Germanic race, of the unity of Germany. We were commanded to be patriotic, and straightway we became patriots—for we always obey when our princes command." "The great unwashed" saw the new enemy, and forgot the old one; they were easily diverted into a crusade against the cosmopolitan and humanitarian ideal of Lessing, Herder, Schiller, Goethe, and Jean Paul. "We flamed with manly wrath at the bondage too long endured; we let ourselves be excited to enthusiasm by the fine melodies but bad verses of Körner's ballads . . . The Romantic school at that time went hand in hand with the machinations of the Government and the secret

societies ; and A. W. Schlegel conspired against Racine with the same aim as Minister Stein plotted against Napoleon. When, finally, German patriotism and nationality were victorious, the popular Teutonic-Christian-Romantic school, 'the new German-religious-patriotic art-school,' triumphed also."

But with Metternich came an intellectual reaction. In the Middle Ages, faith had worked wonders because it was sincere. The new mediævalists tried to catch the old infection. "They made a pilgrimage to Rome, where the vice-regent of Christ was to re-invigorate consumptive German art with asses' milk. Many, for instance, Joseph Görres and Clemens Brentano, were Catholics by birth, and required no formal ceremony to mark their re-adhesion to the Catholic faith ; they merely renounced their former free-thinking views. Others, however, like Frederick Schlegel, Ludwig Tieck, Novalis, Werner, Schütz, Carové, and Adam Müller, were born and bred Protestants ; and their conversion to Catholicism required a public ceremony. These were authors ; the number of painters who, in swarms simultaneously, adjoined Protestantism and reason was much larger . . . But when it was discovered that this propaganda was the work of priests and aristocrats, who had conspired against the political and religious liberties of Europe ; when it was seen that it was Jesuitism which was seeking, with the dulcet tones of Romanticism, to lure the youth of Germany to their ruin, after the manner of the mythical rat-catcher of Hamelin, there was great indignation." Johann Heinrich Voss, the healthy rationalist, whom Menzel calls "a Saxon boor," gave the "new troubadours" many a shrewd blow ; and the acute phase of the fever passed. "The Germans themselves," adds Heine, "are that learned

Doctor Faust, they themselves are that spiritualist who, having at last comprehended the inadequacy of the spiritual life alone, reinstates the flesh in its rights."¹ Freiligrath had a like idea: "Deutschland ist Hamlet." But the world's greatest play would have a very different flavour if there were eleven Ophelias to one Prince!

For that is the outstanding feature of the Romantic movement of which it was impossible, until much later, to see or state the level truth. It was a cult of philanderers. Not infrequently the comedy ended in tragedy and shame; but a sort of philandering is the most characteristic mark of the movement. It began in Berlin, where the cult had one of its chief altars in the salon of Henrietta Herz. Henrietta, a bright and beautiful Jewess, thirty-nine years old when (in 1803) she buried the rich husband to whom she had been tied at fifteen, saw her future satisfaction in the rôle of hostess to the group of distinguished writers who were gathering in the Prussian capital, and their young admirers. A. W. Schlegel had just delivered his famous lectures on literature and art; Tieck, a Berliner, and Novalis, Friedrich Schlegel and Wilhelm von Humboldt—both of whom found wives among Henrietta's friends, as did Schiller—Arnim and Brentano, who came from Heidelberg in 1809, Fouqué and Savigny, last but not least, Hegel (in 1818), were stirring the dry-bones of the Voltairian rationalism which had been the ruling fashion since the hey-day of Frederick the Great. To a period of ultra-masculinity, an ultra-feminine phase had succeeded. Henrietta founded as an annexe to her receptions a "League of Virtue," a sort of women's club with a minority of male

¹ The citations are from two volumes in the "Scott Library."

members. Its first rule was "to break down all the barriers of purely worldly calculation," and its second "to taste all the joys that do not leave regret in the soul." Humboldt described its object as "die Beglückung durch Liebe," the making-happy through love. The young members exchanged presents and portraits, experiences and aspirations; most particularly they exchanged love letters—not the businesslike communications of to-day, but essays in self-analysis or vaguely erotic dreaming, illustrated with cabalistic signs to emphasize the secrecy which befits such traffic. "After thou wert gone, my dear Wilhelm," writes Katherine von Dacheröden to Humboldt, "there was a terrible blank in my heart, such an anxiety, such a feeling of abandonment, that I was obliged to leave the society in which I found myself. I felt that I must be alone, that I should betray myself if I remained. I crept mechanically into the garden, and found myself, without intending it, in the shade of the poplar avenue. I remembered then that it was there I had heard the postillion who announced your arrival, and that from there doubtless I should see you again. I leaned against a tree, and my full heart overflowed in tears."

And so on. Humboldt was not the only member of the circle whom the lady adored; and she was not the only one whom he—in after days the cool statesman, diplomatist, and savant—"tutored." But they married, and became the happy exceptions to the rule. In 1808, Humboldt returned from Italy to Berlin as Minister of Public Instruction, to found the Berlin University, and to establish the educational system which was to make Prussia famous throughout the thinking world. It went far otherwise with most of the Romantics. There

is one curiously extreme tragedy on record, which may be mentioned illustratively because it is probably unique in human history—that of a woman who committed suicide “in the hope that a deep sorrow would awaken her husband’s genius.”¹ The end of the poet Kleist is more characteristic. He and a Frau Vogel resolved to die together, and betook themselves for the purpose to an inn at Wilhelmstadt, between Berlin and Potsdam. Here they spent a night and a day praying and singing, drinking much wine, rum, and coffee, and writing an explanatory letter. They then proceeded to the “Sacred Lake,” sat down opposite each other, and Kleist shot the lady through the heart and himself through the head.

It was evidently supposed by the great writers of the movement that a refined romanticism would be the supreme Teutonic contribution to Western progress. That dream, like the dream of classicism, and the dream of metaphysics, passed away. A healthy literature cannot come out of an anæmic and disjointed society. Diseased conditions do not, indeed, prevent, and may stimulate change; but the change will be ill-balanced, violent, and impotent for lasting good. I have spoken on an earlier page of the importance for social health of a balance of the sexes and their influence, and of the grave disturbance of that balance in course of three centuries of warfare. There can be little doubt that, at the beginning of the nineteenth century, the German stock was seriously devitalized; and it is probable that the whole Romantic

¹ Charlotte, the wife of Heinrich Stieglitz, “a Berlin teacher who had published four volumes of indifferent poetry, but believed he was born to great things.” Robertson: *German Literature*, p. 515.

movement in Western Europe was due as much to physiological exhaustion, after the Napoleonic wars, as to the intellectual reaction against outworn forms—literary, social, and political—to which it is usually attributed. In Germany, the ravages of war had continued for three centuries; and though there were, of course, breaks of peace, though some backwaters of the countryside escaped the main floods of invasion, wounds remained that would need generations to heal; wounds not simply in the material condition, but in the very character of the people. Peace, when it came, brought neither freedom nor any unification of society; and the slowness of the demand for these basic conditions of progress best indicates the demoralization of the time. It needed high courage to fight for the elements of freedom against the petty tyrants who flourished in the shade of Metternich; and high courage must always be rare in a community so long harassed, so desperately backward. No sooner had a real improvement begun to manifest itself than a new storm-cloud appeared upon the horizon, herald of that manifold change which we now call the Industrial Revolution.

The Romantic movement flickered out. Its vague sentimentalities no more than its scholarship or its hankerings after the mediæval appealed to the common-sense of the common people. The exiles of "Young Germany" (Ludwig Börne, like Harry Heine, sent home from Paris his fiercest appeals for reform) killed it with ridicule. Heine lived to decry the bourgeois Liberal and the cake-and-ale democrat of 1839 and 1848, and even to make his peace with the Catholic Church. But the rare singer never fell into the superstition of art-for-art's sake; life never lost its supremacy for him. Börne

likened him to a lad chasing butterflies on a battlefield, and getting between the soldiers' legs. The poet is justified by his vision. "Only our most remote descendants," wrote Heine, "will be able to decide whether we deserve blame or praise for completing our philosophy first, and our political revolution afterwards." That infallibly must come. "And when ye hear the rumbling and the crumbling, take heed, ye neighbours of France, and meddle not with what we do in Germany. It might bring harm on you. Take heed not to kindle the fire; take heed not to quench it. You might as easily burn your fingers in the flame . . . A drama will be enacted in Germany, in comparison with which the French Revolution will appear a harmless idyll . . . I advise you, ye French, keep very quiet then; on your souls take heed that you applaud not. You have more to fear from emancipated Germany than from the whole Holy Alliance, with all its Croats and Cossacks."

It is possible Heine's prophecy may yet be verified, though there is, up to this day, little more sign of his Revolution than of Schiller's Republic. Seventy years ago there was a stirring of the dry bones, a wide sowing of seeds of discontent, that is all, or nearly all. Mazzini was inciting Young Europe to action. If Bavaria and Saxe-Coburg could give constitutional sovereigns to the new States of Greece and Belgium, it was evidently time for Germans to provide themselves similarly. For the first time, a strong desire for social liberty and national union was afoot; and, in verse especially, the revolutionary and national notes were insistently struck. It is singular that "Die Wacht am Rhein," "Der Deutsche Rhein," and "Deutschland, Deutschland über alles," were all written in 1840-1. While the masses of the people

were dull and faint-hearted, many individual cases of heroism are on record. Men were brutally ejected from their professorships because they would not betray the progressive ideal. Thus, in 1837, the King of Hanover victimized the historians, Albrecht Gervinus and Dahlmann, the brothers Grimm, and others, remarking that he could buy professors as easily as ballet-dancers. Herwegh, Freiligrath, and Gottfried Kinkel narrowly escaped imprisonment for *lèse majesté*; Fritz Reuter spent seven years in a fortress for wearing a radical badge. In some places the permission of the press censor had to be obtained ere visiting cards could be printed. "Give me the liberty of the press," said Sheridan (in 1810), "and I will give the Minister a venal House of Peers; I will give him a corrupt and servile House of Commons, the full swing of patronage, all the power that place can confer upon him to purchase submission and overawe resistance; and yet, armed with the liberty of the press, I will go forth to meet him undismayed." A generation later, Germany was less free in this essential respect than England had been at the height of the Napoleonic terror.

Henceforth, German literature is not pre-eminent; it no longer enlists the highest genius or leads the life of the people. Another than a literary inspiration succeeds. The teaching of Hegel and Fichte, flavoured with recollections of the paternalism of the more enlightened Prussian rulers, gave a special turn to the floating revolutionary feeling of the day. Long afterwards (in 1884) Bismarck was to refer back to the Prussian *Landrecht*, completed by Frederick William III in 1794, as his authority for recognizing the labourer's "right to work" (*Recht auf Arbeit*); it, in fact, laid down that work

"adapted to their strength and capacities" must be provided by the State for those who could not find it for themselves. Hegel's "Philosophy of Right" (1821) directed to the State those eyes which in France were set upon the vision of Fourier's "phalansteries," or ideal communes, and in England on Robert Owen's experiments in co-operative production. At the same time, the Stein-Hardenberg legislation made a narrow path through the chaos of feudal *débris*, inviting bolder efforts. But in Germany the manufacturing processes which had brought a flood of wealth and a greater flood of misery to England were yet in their infancy; and there were no Chartist mobs to force the Philosophic Radicals forward. In revenge, Socialism in Germany took from the first a more resolute and a more scientific form.

After the failure of the Revolution of '48, a generation of mediocrity, subservience, and pessimism suffered a feeble revival of romantic fantasies and foreign tastes, revealing also, however, a deeper interest in peasant life (Auerbach), industrial conditions (Spielhagen), social history (Freytag), and general history (Mommsen, Ranke, Sybel, Burckhardt, and Treitschke). Nor did a series of triumphant wars and the creation of the new Empire produce any literary work of the first order. Of Nietzsche I have spoken, and of Wagner I shall speak presently. Except these, the greatest literary influences of recent years have come from outside, the strongest, perhaps, being that of Henrik Ibsen. In view of the peculiar bent of the German mind toward the romantic, the realism even of a Zola or a Gorky must be accounted a healthy influence; it is, at any rate, under this sort of impulsion that Hauptmann, Sudermann, and other living writers have produced their

best. But more powerful than any literary impulses have been those due to new social conditions. Marx and Bismarck—these names represent the dominant forces of the last half century. Germany is no longer a congeries of debilitated fragments of a once great society; at great cost it has achieved a sort of unity and a sort of liberty. Its energies flow strongly, if not with absolute freedom, in many channels. Intellectual teachers need no longer disguise their conclusions in the form of historical treatises. Pure speculation and imagination have suffered as material interests have increased; high originality is rarer since the general level of intelligence has been so wonderfully raised by a century of compulsory schooling. Patronage is transformed, rather than extinguished: genius does not now glorify the lists of royal or ducal pensioners; scientific research has become an appendage to machine industry. The universities are no longer the sole centres of enlightenment, though they still stand for more than those of England in the national life. A prodigious press, in some respects solider and more well-equipped than any in the world, echoes every nuance of contemporary thought. The mind of the Empire is daily gaining in homogeneity; but there is still enough difference between north and south, east and west, between Munich and Berlin, Cologne and Dresden, to ensure a healthy variety and competition of interests and ideas. It remains to be seen, now that Germany has won a measure of political unity and international respect, whether she will be able again to reach such an intellectual supremacy as she enjoyed in less fortunate days.

III. MUSIC, FROM HANDEL TO WAGNER

Nothing is more characteristic of the German people than their faculty and love of musical expression. Throughout the ages this has been a feature of their life; and what in the further past was the cheer of the solitary farmstead, the village green, the city guild, the noble's castle, and the glory of the great Christian churches, has, during the last two centuries, become a vastly elaborated secular art, supported by an educational apparatus, professional organizations, and an industrial and trade machinery, in all of which Germany leads the world. The tinkling rivulets of the ancient "Volkslieder" have grown into a veritable orchestral Niagara,* to which, at any given moment, scores of thousands of professors and pupils, composers and executants are contributing, with a gymnastic ability and a variety of instrumental resource that would have been more startling to Johann Sebastian Bach than any eccentricity of the Wagnerian leit-motif, or any sensationalism of Richard Strauss. The simple impulse of the mediæval minstrel, of Hans Sachs and the Pied Piper, the shepherd boy and the psalm-singing Lutheran soldier, may live in out-of-the-way places. In general it has been overlaid and sophisticated by a musical system, as the spinning and weaving of wool have been captured and transformed by a system of steam-driven spindles and looms. It also has suffered an industrial revolution, for which many a croaking Malthus might be found. The men who invented the pianoforte out of the old harpsichord (between 1720 and 1820) are responsible for much joy and not a little misery. By how many jaded parents and lovers of quietude are they cursed;

by how many struggling teachers, examiners, singers, executants, agents, ground landlords, music printers, publishers, inventors of ephemeral pieces, newspaper critics, and advertising managers, should they be blessed ! In the mind's eye, one sees the sky filled, as by a great bird migration, with a seasonal goose-flight of short-frocked misses from all over Europe to the Conservatoires of Dresden, Frankfurt, Munich. What would the idle classes of the western world have done without this occupation of ears and fingers on which Satan has proverbial designs ? That is one aspect of the still unwritten Economics of Music.

Forms of æsthetic pleasure may be more justly excused from utilitarian tests than forms of intellectual culture ; but they, too, show the marks of time and circumstance. A very rapid glance at the modern development of the musical art will serve to show that it is symptomatic not only of the wealth of genius in the German nature, but of the character of that genius, and of the changes it has undergone under pressure of social environment or in agreement with it. This is first seen in the conflict of the Italian and German operatic schools, which fills the greater part of the eighteenth century, a late form of the general culture-conflict between the Reformation North and the Renaissance South. Italy was earliest in possession of the stage. With Bach and Handel, in the first half of the eighteenth century, Glück, Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven, in the latter half, and Weber, Meyerbeer, Schubert, Schumann and Mendelssohn, in the first half of the nineteenth, Germany claimed and took the supreme place, by virtue of a double achievement—a reform and enrichment of opera, and a superb structure of instrumental music culminating in the orchestral symphony and

the pianoforte sonata. Germany has been described as the land of harmony, Italy that of melody. Heine thus distinguished between Meyerbeer and Rossini. Both are lands of song; but sentiment and humour are to the one what rhetoric and wit are to the other; the north is strongest in its *ensemble*, the south in its "star" pieces.

In Bach (1685-1750), son of a Court musician, and himself Kapell-meister successively at several of the petty German Courts, the issue is not yet joined. He is the Gothic architect of tone. The thrifty father of twenty children, who were to carry on nobly the family tradition, he cleared the ground, built the house of modern music, and taught those who were to follow how to beautify it. The rough Saxon, Handel (1685-1759), is the pioneer of two generations of exiles from a broken Fatherland, dependent on the caprices of foreign patronage. It was George of Brunswick, Elector of Hanover, who sent Handel to England, and, as George I, kept him there with a pension of £200 a year. This was soon bettered by the support of "gracious Chandos," and the condescension of duchesses, wits, and poets. But now the conflict began; the forgotten Bononcini being to Handel what Piccini was to Glück in the Paris of Marie Antoinette; what Salieri was to Mozart, Rossini to Weber, and what the Italian critics were afterwards to Wagner. Handel's first oratorio (1731) rallied that in the English mind which is most akin to the German; and though the Horace Walpoles sneered, a sure platform had been made for German music in England. Glück (1714-1787), a child of the Palatinate, who lived between Vienna and Paris, breathed a new spirit into opera, elaborating the recitative, and disciplining arias and duos to the dramatic sense

and poetic basis of the whole. Prim, happy Haydn (1732-1809), the thirty years' protégé of the Austrian Esterhazys, gave the new sonata form splendid extension in the chamber quartet and the orchestral symphony; and the Tyrolese-Viennese, Mozart (1756-91), with unparalleled precocity, poured out sonatas, symphonies, masses, and operas, full of the balanced beauty of his own gay and tender nature. *Figaro*, *Don Giovanni*, and *The Magic Flute* live through all changes of fashion; yet their author, the greatest pianoforte player as well as the greatest composer of his day, was buried in a pauper's grave which has never been identified. The tragedy of Beethoven's life (1770-1827) is still deeper, for to grim poverty was added for him the infliction of deafness. The greatest musician of all time was no lover of rank and arbitrary power, as many incidents show, (for instance, his angry excision of the dedication to Napoleon of the "Eroica" symphony, when the revolutionary General made himself Emperor); he owed such small comfort as his later years held, however, to the charity of an Austrian Archduke. In Beethoven and Mozart musical expression advanced from the song and hymn, or mosaic of songs or hymns, to the majestic dimensions of pure tone epic. With them music rises, as philosophy had done under Kant and literature under Goethe, into complete independence of the Church and of lesser fashions and conventions; it is no longer a servant, but a self-sustained and, indeed, a peculiarly self-centred art.

From these classic heights, we come down to two of the most happy figures of the now rising Romantic movement—Franz Schubert and Robert Schumann. In less than twenty years, (he was only 31 when he died, a year after

his idol, Beethoven) Schubert wrote nearly a thousand pieces, most of them songs, settings of the lyrics of Goethe, Heine, and other great living poets. The vigour of fancy and vivid colour of these songs, especially those in which the melody changes and those most dramatic in character, was something quite new, and took the young generation by storm. The *Erl-König* is said to have been done in an hour, and the *Standchen* to have been written in a few minutes on the back of a bill-of-fare in a Vienna tavern. It had become possible now for a German musician to live in his own land; but Schubert had a hard struggle against poverty. Schumann was more fortunate. Indeed, in the period of political reaction and intellectual barrenness after Waterloo, much of the energy and the public interest that were thwarted in other directions were transferred to the sphere of musical activity. Here Philistinism could be safely and not unprofitably combated. Here was a voice for all the vague longings of the time. Accordingly, the art was stimulated, as philosophy had lately been, by a sense of reality, of functional vitality. Schumann, thinker and critic, as well as composer, was a more intellectual, less spontaneous, more consciously revolutionary Schubert. He suffered latterly from brain disease, and died in an asylum in 1856. Karl von Weber (1786-1826) had better ground for revolutionary feeling. A Holsteiner, son of a poor army officer, he suffered four years of servitude in the miserable royal family of Württemberg, and was once cast into prison for playing an innocent joke on the half-crazy King. *Der Freischütz* caught the wave of patriotic feeling in the early 'twenties; and the romantic and descriptive qualities of *Euryanthe*, *Preciosa*, and *Oberon* appealed straight to the German heart. In Mendelssohn (1809-47), the Romantic move-

ment culminates and ends. The turgid mountain torrent is now a pellucid stream, flowing between meadows and woods, and reflecting their sweet and gentle life. Happy and fortunate from first to last, Jewish intelligence broadening German industry, and cosmopolitan experience enriching both, Mendelssohn's score lies always in the sunshine. The Prince Consort congratulated him that, "surrounded by the Baal-worship of corrupted art," he was true to the pure notes of "expressive composition and legitimate harmony." A year after his death, the Revolution of '48 ushered in a new order.

We must speak of the protagonist of this new impulse, Richard Wagner (1813-83), somewhat more fully. Time has stilled both sides of the controversy he raised. Few now question his immense achievement, the impressive results, of his combination of the rôles of poetic dramatist and musical dramatist, his triumphs in either part, the variety of his successful inventions—romantic-tragic (*Der Fliegende Holländer*, *Tannhäuser*, *Tristan*), romantic-comic (*Die Meistersinger*), epical (the vast tetralogy of the *Ring des Nibelungen*), religious (*Parsival*). In these works, the equal wedding of words and tones—the one unrhymed, following the Norse alliterative rhythm, the other a continuous flow of accompanying melody—produced upon cultivated and sensitive ears a total impression which Tolstoy rightly described as hypnotic. Whether the desire for more colour in orchestral effect has produced the improved instruments, especially for the wind, of the nineteenth as compared with the eighteenth century, or the improved instruments suggested to composers a richer method, this now became the strongest part of the whole, the successor of the old chorus. The voice has fallen to be one among many instruments ;

lyrical beauty is rarer, declamation more abundant; the individual struggles for a hearing through a portentous multiple effect. Many of Wagner's novel orchestral devices, especially his prodigal modulation, have infected every subsequent composer; and his demand that all the arts—painting, architecture, and sculpture, as well as poetry and music—should be brought to the service of the music-drama has not been without influence. On the other hand, the single personality of Brahms is sufficient to prove that the day of "absolute music" is not over; the most faithful of disciples chafe under the tyranny of the leit-motif; it is evidently too much to expect frequent combinations of poet and musical composer in one person, or Bayreuth conditions to become general; there are those who hope that opera may be brought much closer to real life than has yet been attempted; and it is certain that the "art-work of the future" will contain other than Wagnerian elements.

Wagner was a revolutionist—after the manner of the German '48. When his appeal to the King of Saxony to take the people's side failed, he ranged himself plainly with Roeckel and Bakunin; and, though he did not suffer imprisonment with them, he suffered material ruin and twelve years of exile. The first seven of these were spent mainly in Zurich (*The Ring* was written during this time); thereafter he stayed in London till 1861, when King Ludwig of Bavaria invited him to Munich, and his triumphs began.¹ *The Ring*, however, was not produced at

¹ Busch—in his *Bismarck*, under date March 7, 1872—notes that the Chancellor's secret service in Russia reported Wagner, then in Switzerland, as "a very dangerous man who made the worst possible use of his relations with King Lewis." But, adds the shrewd Buschlein, "it is doubtless a mare's nest, like much more that is related of the International, or still more probably

Bayreuth till 1876, when '48 was forgotten in the triumphs of Bismarck and Moltke. The revolutionary element in the play is as marked as in the music. It once seemed that this might be for us what we supposed the Homeric epics and the Athenian drama to have been for the ancients. And, indeed, though its philosophic structure will not bear close analysis, as an emotional presentation of natural religion and its ethical content the modern world has nothing to compare with it. Wagner brought an unique equipment to his task—an original, impetuous, fertile intelligence, a wide knowledge of northern mythology, a peculiar gift of stagecraft, a complete command of musical resources. But with him, as with his German contemporaries, the revolutionary spirit never quite freed itself of its romantic swaddling-clothes. It may be held that the real things of every day would be incongruous in music-drama. No doubt, as John Addington Symonds says, "myths, by reason of their symbolic pregnancy and spontaneity of origin, are everlastingly elastic," and therefore make better material for musical treatment. From beginning to end of an arduous life, Wagner chose only mythical and legendary subjects; the appreciation of the tragedy of human destinies which suggested them was coloured by a persistent interest in the mystical and fabulous-heroic. A revolution in musical method is one thing—that Wagner undoubtedly produced. A revolution in society and the individual heart he equally aimed at; but here he conspicuously failed, because such a result cannot be produced by any "everlastingly elastic" means. From the days of Him

an invention of the Russian police; the object of these weighty discoveries being gold snuff-boxes, decorations, and such like douceurs" (Vol. II, p. 169).

who "came not to bring peace but a sword" to those of Karl Marx, the Jews have always known this truth. The French have known it. The English still have something of the temper that cowed King John and finished Charles I. An Ibsen is unbendable. Tolstoy also uses legend and parable, but only in the simplest way; his directness is terrible, he suspects his own love of music. The great Germans who have nothing of the "everlasting elastic" of romanticism in their nature are few, and are nearly all on the anti-revolutionary side. Wagner's work so gluttoned the emotional Teutonic nature that it was positively supposed at one time to represent the "national uprising" led by the men of "blood and iron"!

The Ring was, in fact, intended as an allegory of the downfall of imperialism and plutocracy. Fate, for Wagner, is the rule, not of terror, but of love; and fate has decreed that not even the gods shall survive upon mere power, authority, convention. Loveless dominion is not safe even in Valhalla; the human heart will be free from care and pain only when it is purged of gross and selfish desire. The "Rheingold" tells the preliminary story of Wotan's sin. He wants an impregnable castle built, and has promised to deliver up Freia, the goddess of youth, to the giants who accomplish the task, hoping in some way to evade the payment. The Nibelungs' hoard offers the opportunity; and, having stolen the gold from the dwarf Alberich, who had stolen it from the Rhine maidens, Wotan hands it and the magic ring over to the giants, and retires to Valhalla, to guard which he will create a race of heroes and valkyries. Except Alberich—thanks to the wonderful realism of the Nibelheim music, evidently a phonogrammatic reproduction of mine life, and a Doré-like vision of a gang of dwarf slaves—Wagner's

giants, dwarfs, and dragons fail to come home to us. A century of invention, discovery, criticism, has virtually abolished the fear of mere brute malignity. Not that the Devil is dead, by any means; Loge, primordially the god of Fire, and by analogy of cunning, gave Wagner the embryo of a very good and very modern Devil. The Trilog^y proper, telling of the spread of the curse through successive generations of gods, heroes, and men, begins with "Die Walküre." Wotan, the Emperor over whom the menace of a fate which is the other side of love hangs imminent, thinks that in Siegmund he has a son who will, of his own free choice, recover the ring and save Valhalla. But free choice leads Siegmund to renounce the whole imperial idea, and to choose death for love in preference to a loveless glory. The history of Brünnhilde, in the latter half of the tetralogy, is a restatement of the same idea in slightly different terms. Brünnhilde returns the ring to the waters of the Rhine, renouncing life; while a glow in the northern sky indicates the fall of Valhalla and the "Dusk of the Gods." This is but a formal drop of the curtain prior to its rising in *Parsival* upon a yet more modern version of the same subject, a Christian rendering of the Schopenhauerian idea of renunciation. Throughout this prodigious series, there is a restless strain, a constant suggestion of a driving fate, that echo the insurgence of the time. The people have arrived; and Richard Wagner is their prophet. After forty years, we rather doubt his prophetic power, because we notice that, after all, the people have still not arrived.

Schopenhauer denied, as Tolstoy did, the possibility of conveying moral ideas through such a medium as the Wagnerian music-drama. "During the performance of

a highly complicated opera music, the mind is acted upon through the eye, by means of a brilliant spectacle, fantastic images, and gay impressions of light and colour, in addition to which the plot of the piece occupies it. By all this, it is drawn away, distracted, and deadened, and thus rendered as little as possible receptive for the holy, mysterious, inward language of tones . . . Strictly speaking, one might call the opera an unmusical invention for the sake of unmusical minds, into which music has to be first impressed by a medium foreign to it. Masses and symphonies alone give unalloyed and perfect musical enjoyment."¹ We have seen that Nietzsche spoke more rudely to the same effect. Wagner himself thought that even the most beautiful symphonic piece leaves distracting questions which music, allied with drama, settled in a flood of ecstasy. Such silencing is of dubious worth; but it is like the sensationalist to desire it. At the other pole stands the intellectual Superman, scornful of all attempts to reform the world, and scornful of Wagner's art as morbid, hysterical, rhetorical, brutal, "the gymnastics of the loathsome on the rope of enharmonics," "always just five steps from the hospital," "seduction in the grand style," and so on.

Beethoven would have pointed us to a truth between and above these extremes. The prospect of the enrichment or degradation of any art, and especially of music, pre-eminently the popular art, is in itself a matter of no small importance. In that vast world of rhythmic experience, in whose heights and depths the free spirit moves at ease, uttering itself in a larger language, where even ideation is not or is only beginning to be, there is a relief from normal activities that may be of the utmost curative

¹ Schopenhauer : *On the Beautiful and on Æsthetics*.

value for body and mind. There, if nowhere else, the ideal seems to be won without strife, and we discover how much more we are than the sordid routine of existence, or even our conscious intellectual and moral exercises, reveal. The real evil is not the extended enjoyment of passionate sensation, but the divorce of this emotional experience from the realities of life—the cultivation of emotion to the neglect of these realities, or its misapplication to them.

That this has been a main result of the Wagnerian movement can hardly be doubted. "Society" has received the rebel into its bosom; *la haute juiverie*—does it know what "the Master" thought of it?—has made the Bühnenfestspiele its own. Bayreuth, amid the Bavarian hills and pine-woods, is not essentially different from Covent Garden, so appropriately set between a market and a police-court. Neither prices so high as to exclude the labouring man, nor novel arrangements of hours, nor draconic regulations as to dress, punctuality, and behaviour, impede the children of pleasure when fashion calls. But for those who have ears to hear, the mighty orchestra stills neither the questioning of the soul nor the dull roar of the struggling outer world, that terrible symphony. The lucid and receptive spirit which the highest music requires is not here possible. The ideal drama cannot be founded by money-making syndicates under the patronage of the wealthy idlers of a distracted community; it is not in jaded nerves and minds poisoned by indulgence and convention that the most elusive of the arts can work its wonders. All true art is an emanation of vitality. It needs not the call to a "retreat" in some

"cloistral round
Of reverie, of shade, of prayer,"

but the corrective of hard, manly labour at common social tasks. And of all the arts, music is the supreme crown of the healthy life. Wagner required, but rarely obtains, in his audiences something of the earnestness, open-mindedness, and mental vigour which he had himself given to a task demanding these qualities in rare measure. He only started a movement, which Strauss and Humperdinck have carried but little further. Not for long will the choice lie between these and the decrepit forms of opera and oratorio ; but a smaller naturalistic music-drama will arise, reflecting directly upon social life, while pure music advances in the accomplishment of its indirect task of relaxation and refinement.

CHAPTER V

UP FROM THE DEPTHS

I. METTERNICH

A PERIOD of social convalescence makes so dull a tale that it is usually slurred over ; and the next half century shows little of interest until the clash of awakening peoples and governments obstinately bent on keeping them divided and powerless becomes insistent. The map of Germany has been radically changed. With the Holy Roman Empire has gone the elective Emperor ; but an Emperor of Austria has emerged to maintain all that is real of the old pretensions, and five kings—of Prussia, Hanover, Saxony, Bavaria, and Württemberg. The Kings of France and Sweden are no longer German sovereigns ; but the Kings of England, Holland, and Denmark claim seats in the federal body (for Hanover, Luxemburg, and Holstein). Three hundred independent States, including the Ecclesiastical Principalities and those of the Knights of the Empire, have disappeared. Thirty-nine remain, and because they are stronger and their sovereignty is now unquestioned, they present a stouter barrier against the movement for unity than the larger number of the old order. It is the south that is now the more compact, the north that is more divided. In the parcelling-out of 1815, Prussia, beside an indemnity of nearly six million pounds, has recovered the Duchies

of Westphalia and Berg, together with the northern half of the Saxon Kingdom, the West Rhineland from Aachen to Mainz, Swedish Pomerania, and the Grand Duchy of Posen. Thanks to the Duke of Wellington, the claim of Stein and Hardenberg for the cession of Alsace and Lorraine has been rejected.

Stein, who, during the Russian campaign, had proposed that all German Princes who supported Napoleon should be dethroned, exhibited at the Congress of Vienna the poverty of Prussian statesmanship, in urging the re-establishment of the Germanic Empire. Metternich, with the Kings of Bavaria and Würtemberg and the princelings of the middle States at heel, knew a game worth two of this. By Act of Federation signed on June 8, 1815, a German *Bund* was created consisting of the thirty-nine independent States (the free cities of Frankfurt, Lübeck, Hamburg, and Bremen included), with a Diet of governmental delegates to sit permanently in Frankfurt under perpetual Austrian presidency. The States undertook to establish Constitutions and equality of civil and religious rights, to contribute according to population to a federal army, and not to act against each other or the common interest. None of these promises was fully or generally carried out. Neither federal Courts nor federal ambassadors were appointed; and the army law was not put into force for twenty-five years. The Diet was, in fact, impotent in large matters and incapable in small, and became the laughing-stock of the time. Metternich, the reaction incarnate, had a more effective instrument in a standing Committee of Ambassadors of Austria, England, Russia, and France, sitting in Paris (basis of the later Concert of Europe), and spent most of the remainder of his active life in

marshalling the powers of European Conservatism against the ideals of Germanic union and freedom. It did not trouble him that the lesser States under Austrian tutelage or French influence should pay lip-service to constitutional forms; so, between 1815 and 1820, the peoples of Bavaria, Baden, Württemberg, Saxe-Weimar, and Hesse-Darmstadt received varying measures of self-government. It suited him well, very well, that Prussia should be crippled by a standing feud between subjects and rulers. Frederick William easily fell into this trap.

In the first rapture of 1815, he had promised to summon the old Estates for the seven provinces of Prussia, with a view to the creation of a national assembly. The distinction is essential. The Estates were survivals of feudal particularism and class divisions, committees of the property-holders in country and town of the several provinces, whose historic task was to defend privileges originally extorted by the vassals of different grades from the feudal lord, or to obtain new privileges. Each of the three classes in the Estates had to defend itself against the other, and the supreme lord, the King, played one class off against another as his interest suggested. They had none but consultative powers; the propertied classes, represented in proportion to their wealth, and subject to a careful segregation, were always in a large majority. In the whole monarchy there were 278 noble, 182 burgess, and 124 peasant representatives. A national parliamentary system was at the opposite political pole from this weird relic of the Middle Ages; and the transition, at best, could not have been easy. Prussia, which had given the world the most elaborate expositions of the world of pure thought, was an infant school in affairs political. An earnest and wide-spread demand un-

doubtedly existed for parliamentary institutions as a reward for the sacrifices of a devoted nation. But nobody seems to have known exactly what parliamentary institutions were, or how they were to be obtained. In literature, strong impulses had reached Germany from England; in politics, none at all. Between aristocratic liberals like Niebuhr and Dahlmann, with no large following, but appealing to the better traditions of the great Germanic past, and democratic liberals with wider but still mainly academic support, appealing to the better side of the French Revolution and its accomplished work of renovation in the south, what was the humble un-instructed shopkeeper or artisan of the sleepy town to think? Every one knew that two things were needed: representative government and national unity. But the large States which gave the best hope for a still larger combination were slaves of a mulish absolutism; the small States, where there was most liberty, were led by this very fact most jealously to guard their independence. The effort of Württemberg, in 1820, to excite a liberal revolt in the federal Diet led to nothing. Split up into scores of small groups, each faced by an established local authority, and divided according as the national or the liberal feeling predominated, the weakness of the progressive movement is hardly to be wondered at.

On the other hand, the courtiers, bureaucrats, and landlords, especially in Prussia, knew quite well what they wanted. No doubt they dreamed of an impossible revival of absolutism in the capital, and of stocks and whipping-posts in the villages. As a minimum, they were for the status quo—always the most practical of policies. Conservative writers like Schmalz denounced the mildest programmes of reform as anarchy and Jacobinism. Stein

had retired; Hardenberg was exhausted. Speculative thought does not absolutely require any particular tools or environment; it may grow in the cloister and even the log cabin, in the country parsonage or the candle-lit garret. Not so the art of constructive politics, which needs a practice-ground, an habitual conflict of wits, some real measure of power and responsibility, a critical audience with its own powers of reward and punishment. Statesmen are not bred where the only possibilities of a political career lie in the hands of a poor and incapable Court and an uninspired bureaucracy.¹ The spirit of

¹ The *Memoirs* of Prince Chlodwig Hohenlohe-Schillingsfürst (Prime Minister of Bavaria 1867, Imperial Chancellor 1894-1900) give the English reader a favourable impression of the minds and life of the more serious and accomplished aristocrat of this period. The duties of a great landlord and the vacuous pleasures of the little Courts do not satisfy him. He wants to do useful public work; but he is faced in the north by the hard, narrow routine of the Prussian bureaucracy, in the south he prays to be delivered from the "devilish society" of the Jesuits. He complains of solitude. His love of music, as is usual with his countrymen, feeds a native sentimentality. One feels the fate of a clean mind born in a parasitic and functionless Society in such passages as this (April 11, 1842, aged 23): "What a wholly different character I might have become had I remained free from strict domestic supervision from my sixteenth year onwards. I should have committed many follies and, perhaps, have gone to the devil. But it seems to me that I might have become a better man. A passive and dreamy character, weak in action, requires the stimulus of being left to act for itself, and must not be allowed to let things slide if it is really to develop. I am by nature passive, and this continuous state of tutelage has given me a great capacity for introspection, I can hardly say for philosophy, but has contributed in no way to the strengthening of my character."

Sir Robert Morier (*Memoirs*, I, 243) writes to Lord John Russell, in 1860, of the solitariness of the Grand Duke of Baden as illustrating "the sort of political atrophy which the best meaning and most earnest men are reduced to by the provincialism to which the petty prince system has condemned Germany."

progress which, in succeeding generations of Englishmen, had enlisted nobles, yeomen, merchants, and workmen in public work, was here represented by university professors and students, and journalists harried by the police censorship. Its academic air prevented it from being effective, but not from being an annoyance. So, when, at the Wartburg, on October 18, 1817, a gathering of German university delegates, with the authority of the sympathetic government of Weimar, feasted the double anniversary of the Reformation and the battle of Leipzig with songs, prayer, and speeches against fickle kings, and burned together a copy of Schmalz's pamphlet, a soldier's straight-jacket, a pig-tail, and a corporal's cane, the Berlin authorities were thrilled with horror; and when an infatuated student (Karl Sand) stabbed the anti-national dramatist and Russian agent, Kotzebue, even Hardenberg joined the alarmists, declaring that a Constitution for Prussia was out of the question.

The Tsar Alexander was now shedding his singular liberalism; and a diplomatic Conference of the Powers at Aachen, in 1818, gave marching orders which a Conference of the Ministers of eight German States, at Karlsbad, in 1819, elaborated, and the Federal Diet obediently ratified. The agitators, Metternich declared, were educating the next generation in the gymnasia of Prussia for revolution; but, by the help of God, he would defeat them, as he had defeated the conqueror of the world. The press censorship and the official control of the universities were tightened; the innocent romantic Burschenschaften (students clubs) were dissolved; and a Commission was established to suppress secret societies, with power to arrest any subject of any German State. Reassembling in Vienna in June, 1820, the Conference of Ministers

declared that supreme power rested in the Sovereigns alone ; if any Government appealed to it, the Diet was to undertake the suppression of unruly subjects. Except in some of the smaller States, liberty of discussion, teaching, and combination disappeared. Arndt and other professors were dismissed ; authors were prosecuted and imprisoned or expelled. While, thus, throughout Germany, the spy and the policeman reigned supreme, the three despots of Russia, Austria, and Prussia undertook (Conference of Troppau, October, 1820) to suppress rebellion in their own or neighbouring countries.

This combination was not actually as strong as it looked. England and France stood out of it ; the King of Prussia was dragged at the heels of the two Emperors ; the co-operation of Russia and Austria was already threatened by the rival interests in the Near East which destroyed the " Holy Alliance " in 1826. If there had been any volume of democratic vigour in Germany, Metternich would not have carried it off so easily. But when a small class of enlightened men, with traditions of resignation and memories of disorder etched in their minds, separated by their very education from the great mass of their fellows, are thwarted in a sudden hope of freedom, they are apt to fall back upon a settled order as second best. It was essentially a time of recovery, when the best effort and thought had perforce to be given to the work of storing some sort of fund of fluid capital. Germany was poor, thinly populated, and, in the rural life which occupied the great majority, still dominated by feudal customs. The towns were small and much isolated. Even in 1850, only 3½ per cent. of the population lived in towns of 50,000 or more ; textile spinning was still for the most part a home industry, and weaving was

not much more than an appendage to agriculture. The middle classes were not utterly indifferent to national politics, but they were easily disillusioned, schooled to disappointment, chiefly anxious to heal the wounds of trade and industry. The town workmen were still a feeble body. The liberated peasants had not acquired any political consciousness. The Junkers flourished under the reaction, and wanted more of it.

There is another distracting element which may be indicated here, although its chief significance comes later in our story. The reconstruction of Germany had greatly increased the Roman Catholic element in the population. On the east there was included a piece of Catholic Poland, on the west pieces of Catholic France. We have seen that Napoleon's secularization of the ecclesiastical principalities of the Rhineland had created grievances which notably aided the clerical revival in that region, pre-eminently *the* Roman Road of Europe. The problem for Protestant Prussia was a peculiarly difficult one. Frederick the Great, with less than 200,000 Catholic subjects, had found it easy to say: "Let every man go to Heaven by his own path." After the great war, there were four millions, nearly forty per cent. of the whole population. They were mostly concentrated in two regions; in both they had strong anti-Prussian prepossessions; and in both they were strongly organized under Jesuit guidance. In the east, the Church played upon the national traditions and agrarian discontent of the Poles. In the west, it absorbed something of the social spirit of Revolutionary France, and it was helped by the Romantic movement in literature and art. Thus, extremes met in opposition to the Berlin bureaucrats. Frederick William III, with his clumsy efforts after

Christian re-union, had no wits for such an emergency ; and there was open conflict in 1837, when the Archbishop of Cologne was thrown into prison. Frederick William IV, an infatuated pietist whose dream it was to revive the Holy Roman Empire under Catholic Austria, was the cause of a Lutheran secession, but vainly attempted to help the broader Catholics who revolted against such superstitions as were shown in the exhibition of the "Holy Coat" of Trèves. In matters religious, as in matters political, there is the most singular contrast between German and British conditions. The very virtues of the one situation have led to difficulty and failure, where the vices of the other have been forgotten in a supervening peace. In England, the persecution of Catholics and Dissenters, by or in favour of the State Church, continued far into the nineteenth century. Emerson found, in 1847, that "the most sensible and well-informed Englishmen possess the power of thinking just so far as the Bishop in religious matters, and as the Chancellor of the Exchequer in politics." Prussia and other of the German States had long enjoyed the fullest religious toleration ; and this freedom had favoured the growth both of a deep and sincere piety and a system of secular philosophy that has affected the thought of the whole western world. The German opportunity of individual culture has thus been greatly superior. But in social and political progress it is England that has had the advantage. It is long since anything like a clerical party appeared in the House of Commons ; and in modern times Rome has exercised little influence in British politics. In Germany, the Catholic Church, which commands a third of the people, and which has a solid phalanx of a hundred deputies in the Reichstag to-day, has been

one of the strongest obstacles to a clear and sound definition of political ideas and parties.

In France, the overthrow of the Bourbons in the 1830 Revolution made little real difference; in Germany, while it stimulated the discontent of the poets and academic reformers, outside these small circles it revived the old alarm, and brought Russia, Austria, and Prussia together again as guardians of the ancient order. The failure of the Polish insurrection, similarly, while it scattered ardent revolutionists over Central Europe and increased the small number of German republicans, encouraged Metternich to new repressive measures. Some of the lesser States gained a little in the commotion. In Brunswick, the ducal palace was burned down and a constitution extorted. Saxony, Hanover, Hesse-Cassel, and Saxe-Altenburg demanded and received representative institutions and some measure of social liberty. On the other hand, the Chambers in Württemberg and Hesse were dissolved; a poor attempt at insurrection in Frankfurt (April 3, 1833) was easily suppressed by Prussian troops, the King of Hanover withdrew the new constitution, which prevented him from paying his debts by seizing the State Domains, and dismissed the brothers Grimm and other professors from their chairs at Göttingen.

In Prussia, the reaction was at first less violent. The promises of the war of liberation remained unfulfilled. Bureaucratic power was consolidated, and developed much further than liberal minds could approve. But even then Prussian bureaucracy was firmly fixed on a base of State instruction in public duty. Many of the officials had grown up under Stein, and deserved something of Morier's, perhaps too generous, eulogy: "The organization of public

education, the marvellous' ordering of the finances, the development of the material resources of the country the even-handed administration of justice, and the simplification of its machinery—all these, and endless other good works proceeded from the public spirit and self-denying labour of this ill-paid body of public officials, who kept up a sense of responsibility towards their fellow-citizens, and offered the only effective barrier to the retrograde tendencies of the narrow-minded clique who succeeded to office upon Hardenberg's retirement."¹ They made the law and administered it in the spirit of a Minister of the Interior who told the Town Council of Elbing frankly that the measures of the Government were above the limited comprehension of its subjects. But, with their examination tests and slow progress up the ladder of service, these bureaucrats did develop a tradition of pedantic scruple and conscientious industry. Above all, the economic benefits of the emancipation of the peasants and the continued peace were being enhanced by the building of railways and steamships and, the first Free Trade measures of 1834-5, which will be dealt with in a later chapter. The Zollverein which broke down the old customs barriers between Prussia, Bavaria, Württemberg, Saxony, Baden, Thuringia, and Frankfurt, was the greatest social achievement in the half-century after Waterloo, the most concrete form of federal combination, and the basis of all the progress of the subsequent years. A new Germany was growing up while, from Paris to Warsaw and Athens, the joint watchword of democratic liberty and national unity rang across Europe. Nowhere was the struggle to be an easy one; it was

¹ *Memoirs*, vol. I, ch. x. "An essay," by Morier, written in 1859, "on the Present Political Condition of Prussia."

inevitable that it should be most difficult and protracted in the wide extent of the Central Continent where feudal divisions were most lasting, differences of tradition, culture and economic interest most vivid, and the political sense of the people least developed.

Blind with a dull, obstinate stupidity that in Paris would have sharpened the ingenious blade of Dr. Guillotine, the Hohenzollern Court, entrenched in the Junker class, stood athwart the stream of the progressive spirit. Frederick William III had betrayed and humiliated his country during the great war, and disappointed it ever since ; but a prosaic dignity and honesty of life had won him the pardon of a people most of whom could not conceive a State without a feudal head. His son, Frederick William IV, who succeeded in June, 1840, at the age of forty-five, proved a still less delectable figure. Eloquent, sentimental, and vain, not lacking in amiability, but subject to fits of absent-mindedness and transports of joy or rage, he represents a curious but not unimportant section of the reactionary forces of the time—the Romantic Conservatives, or, as the most competent of British observers called them, “ mediæval resurrectionists,”¹ who objected to a clean and competent bureaucracy almost as much as to a modern parliamentarism. He was, when pleased, a typical German of the time in his liking for grandiose phrases about the splendid unity of prince and people, the glory of sacrifice, and the duty to struggle for light, justice, and truth. When men expected him to translate words into deeds, he was annoyed. “ I am better able to judge our political institutions than you are. Your petition is impracticable. I hope there will be no recurrence of this incident. No power on earth

¹ Morier I, 216.

shall force me to act against my conviction." In such words as these, pronounced in 1841, the hopes of a new reign were dissipated. A few years later this crack-brained monarch delivered a hectoring address before an assembly of teachers. They and their system of bogus education were, he declared, solely responsible for the troubles of the time. He hated their sham schooling from the bottom of his heart, and it was not his fault that it continued.

The growing agitation for parliamentary government could not, however, be safely ignored ; and on February 3, 1847, the King, who had been, in his youth, president of a Commission to study the questions involved in his father's promise of a constitution, summoned the Provincial Estates to meet *in pleno* as a States-General for Prussia. Again the amiable optimism of the Teuton nature rose to the bait ; this queer gathering of princes and nobles in the Upper Chamber, and knights, townsmen, and country delegates in the Lower, must, surely, be the prelude to a Constituent Assembly. Frederick William IV meant nothing of the kind, and said so at the opening of the Diet on April 11, 1847. From his ancestors he had inherited absolute authority, and this he would leave to his descendants ; no Constitution or majority government for him, no " piece of written parchment interposed between God in heaven and this land." Let the Liberal press mind its p's and q's ; let the States be satisfied with the defence of their class rights, and not aspire to such " un-German notions " as a national representation of opinion.

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II. THE FAILURES OF 'FORTY-EIGHT

In the tragic story of the German '48, the strands of State and Federal interest, the movements for democratic government in each land, and for a constitutional union of them all, are so closely interwoven, they show such diverse colour in north and south, so many elements, political, intellectual, religious, and economic, they are at so many points affected by events in the surrounding countries, that it is difficult to present a short, clear sketch which does any sort of justice to the facts. Keeping the distinction between Germany as a whole and the separate States in memory, we take the State movements first.

In Prussia, the Liberal majority in the Lower House of the States-General carried an address to the King, pointing out the insufficiency of his concession, and, this proving vain, proceeded to veto a Government proposal for a railway loan. Frederick William replied by dissolving the assembly. Aggravated by the effects of the bad crops of the two previous years, a formidable agitation sprang up; and news of the flight of Louis Philippe and the establishment of the Second French Republic, of the revolution in Vienna and the flight of Metternich, gave it a decisive stimulus. On March 13, 1848, the people of Berlin first came into conflict with the garrison troops. On the 18th, a royal edict appeared summoning the States-General, and promising that the King would aid the establishment both of State and Federal Constitutions. Owing to what is usually described as a misunderstanding, however, an attack was made during the day by the soldiers on the people crowding the streets. The

crowd pillaged the armourers' shops; barricades were raised; and some bloodshed occurred. On the morrow, the King withdrew the troops, and stood uncovered before the bodies of the dead in the courtyard of the Palace. On the 21st, after a spectacular ride through the city, wearing the old German tricolour of gold, white, and black, he issued a manifesto containing the words: "I place myself and my people under the venerable banner of the German Empire. Prussia, henceforth, is merged in Germany." To a deputation, he promised measures securing individual liberty and equality before the law, trial by jury, right of meeting and combination, constitutional institutions, with ministerial responsibility, and the abolition of feudal police rights.

On May 22 (four days after the opening of a Federal Parliament at Frankfurt), the promised Prussian Assembly met in Berlin. Its peculiar vice was (and still is) the system of indirect election. Groups of 500 primary electors, whose qualification was to be twenty-five years old and to have had a domicile for six months, chose a deputy; and these deputies chose a body of 402 members, most of whom proved to be lawyers, professors, and pastors. The first Prussian Diet survived hardly, between the Court and army and the revolutionary workmen, through the summer, accomplishing little. To Bismarck's annoyance, the King assented to a reform of the game laws. Continual quarrels arose between the Civic Guards formed in the various towns and the regular army officers, a class to this day confidently assured of its right to dominate all mere civilians. The Landtag asked the King to intervene, and he refused. The recovery of Vienna from the revolutionaries of Austria seems to have decided Frederick

William's next step. The Prussian Parliament was prorogued, and summoned to meet again in Brandenburg. The majority of deputies refused to do so, and for some days were chased from one rendezvous in Berlin to another. Workmen and middle-class Liberals were now, however, completely estranged; and, when the King dismissed the Civic Guard, proclaimed a state of siege, suspended the liberty of the press and public meeting, and, finally (December 5), dissolved the assembly, there was no effective protest. Summoned again, and again dissolved, the Diet was radically perverted by the royal decree establishing what is known as the Constitution of 1850. On the pretence that "a free people must learn to have the courage to declare its convictions publicly" the vote had to be declared orally. The simple basic suffrage remained; but the primary electors were now divided into three classes, formed by adding up the total of direct tax contributions of a constituency, and dividing it into three electoral blocks, each with equal voting power. Thus, if a constituency yielded £3,000 in taxes, the first class of primary electors might consist of ten men contributing each £100, who would appoint the same number of secondary electors as a thousand men in the third class each paying only £1 in taxes. This ingenious "three-class system" still continues in Prussia, despite half a century of popular protest, and is the strongest rampart of Junkerism in the Prussian State. Needless to say, its first trial yielded a thoroughly obedient Parliament, and thereby the reactionary triumph was complete.

In Berlin, the workmen were the chief strength of the movement, whose proletarian character was emphasized by famine and revolt in Silesia and Posen. In West and South Germany, the influence of French Republicans and

Socialists, and of exiles from many lands, especially Poles, entrenched in Switzerland, gave events a different complexion. Hatred of the Jesuits, republicanism, and cosmopolitan agitation on the different lines of Mazzini, Bakunin, and Marx, were mingled with the demand for a free press and representative government. The ebullition was so sudden and strong that many of the rulers gave way immediately. Under alarm at the seizure of the Munich arsenal, King Ludwig of Bavaria abdicated in favour of his son Maximilian. In Hesse-Darmstadt, the Grand Duke called his son to share his power. In other small States, Liberal ministries were set up ; but things soon slipped into the old ruts. In Baden and the Palatinate, revolutionary outbreaks were twice suppressed with the aid of Prussian troops, after serious fighting. In Nassau there was a considerable peasant revolt. The dissolution of the Saxon Diet provoked a desperate rising ; and Dresden was held for several days by the insurgents against the native and Prussian soldiery. Grossly arbitrary and unconstitutional acts of the Elector of Hesse-Cassel and his minister, Hassenpflug, roused the army as well as the civilians to revolt. Its suppression, on the order of the Federal Diet, by rival bodies of Austrian-Bavarian and Prussian troops (the former under the command of a General Haynau, brother of him who got his deserts at the hands of Barclay and Perkins' brewery men in Whitechapel), raised a political problem of much interest, and, but for the " capitulation " of Prussia at Olmütz, would probably have brought the two chief Germanic States to war.¹

¹ A Memorandum on the Hessian Constitution by Sir R. Morier, written in 1860, may be referred to for details (Morier I, 255-291). In December, 1847, Prince Albert, afterwards Prince

A still more complex, significant, and crucial problem, which vitally affected the course of German affairs and had consequences of European moment, arose from the ambiguous position of those northern borderlands, the Duchies of Schleswig and Holstein. For four centuries their people, largely Germans, had resisted Danish aggression, and maintained their unity under a common Diet, Schleswig remaining, however, a fief of Denmark, and Holstein a fief of Germany. In 1460, in the hope of forever avoiding absorption in the Danish Kingdom, the joint ducal crown was offered to the King of Denmark and his descendants as a purely personal sovereignty. The dual position of the Duke-King was at first emphasized by the fact that the Danish crown was elective, while the Ducal crown was hereditary, and, after 1660, when the Oldenburg dynasty became hereditary, by the facts that the right of female succession existed in Denmark but not in the Duchies, and that one was an absolute, the other a constitutional sovereignty. It is not surprising that the Oldenburg family became divided in interest, the Royal branch seeking to increase Danish power, and

Consort, wrote to Frederick William IV, pointing out the dangers of a conflict in which the Elector (Hesse alone retained the now meaningless title) was flagrantly in the wrong. Morier contends that the power of the Estates to refuse taxes, and the independence of the tribunals, were ancient rights in Hesse, which he portrays as the most unhappy victim of the reaction triumphant in Austria and Prussia. It was the most flagrant case because, "with the exception of some half-dozen pupils of Hassenpflug, the whole country was unanimous in its attachment to the constitution," and because the proceedings of the Frankfurt Assembly were absolutely destitute of legal basis. In 1852, the Elector submitted a new Constitution, which was refused by the Chambers; and the struggle continued till, in 1862, the Elector was foolish enough to insult a Prussian Envoy. Return to the old Constitution was then enforced; and, after the war of 1866, Electoral Hesse was annexed to Prussia.

the Princes of Augustenburg and Glücksburg championing the Duchies. As the Nationalist movement in Austria meant separation, while in Germany it meant union, so here, between 1830 and 1846, the various working of the new spirit was curiously illustrated. The very force of democracy and commercialism which weakened the royal authority in Denmark gave popular support to the old design of absorbing these agricultural and conservative marches, especially the less German of the two, Schleswig. The increase of fiscal burdens, due in part to the recent severance of Norway from the Danish Crown, provided the German borderers with an ever-growing grievance. The fact that the Danish King, Frederick VII, was the last of the male line of his house, gave point to their contention that, under the Salic law, when this line died out the connection of the Duchies with Denmark must cease, as the connection of Hanover with the British Crown had ceased in 1837, on the accession of Queen Victoria.

A first tentative of Danish aggression, in 1846, failed. In 1848, after the revolution in Copenhagen, the incorporation of Schleswig was threatened more urgently. The Duchies then set up a provisional Government to organize armed resistance, and appealed for help to Prussia and to the German Federal Assembly, in which, since the post-Napoleonic settlement, their ruler had held a seat as Duke of Holstein. The Assembly warmly took up the case, and demanded that Schleswig, as well as Holstein, should enter the Federal body. Hostilities between Denmark on the one side, and Prussia, the German Confederation, and the German inhabitants of the Duchies on the other, immediately followed.

With this explanation of the origin of the wars of 1848-

50, and 1864, we must turn to the course of that attempt to establish by compact a veritable Germania which, badly as it miscarried, represented in the year of revolution the maximum of agreement among men of every social condition and political faith in all the German lands.

"In God's name, what is that fearful row?" a frightened Archduke asked Metternich, as the Vienna mob yelled under his windows. "That, sir," replied the grey tyrant, "is what Messieurs the Republicans call the Voice of God." The "row" was not as fearful in Frankfurt, the old federal capital, as in what Kossuth called the Austrian charnel-house; yet it was bad enough to convince the Diet which had sat there since 1816 that a new day had come, and that it must make way for a truer embodiment of German opinion. It was again the south that led the way. Bavaria first took the shock of the Parisian current, but achieved little more than the dismissal of King Ludwig's interesting "favourite," the dancer Lolé Montes. On March 5, 1848, a group of Liberals met at Heidelberg, and instructed a committee of seven members to summon a "preparatory Parliament," consisting of all the men who had been members of any German Chamber. With Vienna in arms, the very police tired of the task of repression, and Metternich and the Emperor in flight; with Frederick William IV donning the tricolour, and declaring that Prussia was merged in Germany, the princes and bureaucrats were powerless. That bumptious young landlord, Otto von Bismarck of Schönhausen, who felt quite otherwise, must bide his time. What plainer than that the old Federal Diet should follow the example of its creator, and disappear? On March 30, and the four following days, five hundred Liberal politicians, mostly from the southern States,

met as a Vorparlament. It was a wordy body; and, at length, a minority of Republicans broke away, to raise, with a body of German refugees, Frenchmen, and Poles, a futile insurrection in Upper Baden. The Governments were, however, thoroughly frightened; and, with their aid, all Germany, from the Vosges to the Vistula, and from the Baltic to the Alps, set itself to the joyful task of electing its best men, one per 50,000 inhabitants, to the first Germanic Parliament. Bohemia declining the invitation, 586 deputies gathered in St. Paul's Church, in Frankfurt, on May 18, 1848.

Arndt, the poet, was there, and was asked to add a suitable stanza to his song, "What is the German's Fatherland?" Gervinus, the Liberal-Conservative historian, was there, and many another patriot of the study, with some clerics and journalists—and, perhaps, half a dozen statesmen in the crowd. What should such a body do with one of the toughest and most tangled of political problems? The extremists had taken themselves off; there was no Second Chamber to raise difficulties; the Governments stood outside watching and waiting, but had no delegates within to make immediate trouble. Difficulties are none the less real, however, for being out of sight—in Vienna or Berlin. On the proposal of the President, Von Gagern, it was decided to elect an "Administrator of the Empire." The name of the King of Prussia having been laughed out, the most popular of German princes, the Austrian Archduke John, was chosen. Prussia bowed with an ill grace. Here the collective wisdom of the Frankfurt Parliament virtually lapsed. Anything like a two-party system was, of course, unequal to representing the manifold activity of the Teutonic intellect. The assembly fell, accordingly, into eleven groups, gravitating around a

Right Centre (mostly Prussian, with the Southern Catholics and Austrians), a Left Centre (South Germans), and a Left whose 200 members called themselves Republicans. How to convert an arbitrary Confederation of States (Staatenbund) into a liberal Federal State (Bundesstaat): such was the constitutional problem. A more practical and experienced assembly would have evaded issues interesting mainly to lawyers, and while there was time would have grappled at once with the essential difficulty, the rival claims of Austria and Prussia. The failure to do so cost Germany two great wars, the Bismarckian régime, and its present constitution. It must, of course, be remembered there was no historical precedent for the creation of a democratic federal body to include a part and (only a part) of an empire, four kingdoms, and thirty other States of various sorts and sizes. It may be replied that a good many points could be drawn from the cases of the old Empire and the United States of America, and that, any way, German theorists had had a whole generation in which to prepare for this crisis and this problem.

The deputies were not only unprepared; they seem to have been oblivious of the fatal flight of time. Their Constitutional Committee proceeded first in professorial fashion to discuss a *Grundrecht*, or fundamental law for the new federation. Louis Napoleon made an ominous appearance in the French Assembly in June; but the professor-deputies talked on. Meanwhile, war had broken out on the Danish border. At the end of March the King of Prussia, for himself and as federal agent, had recognized the rights of the Northern Duchies, and sent an army under General Wrangel to help them. The Danes were soon driven out, and at the beginning of May the Schleswig

border was crossed. Russia and England, scenting the possibility of a neo-Hanseatic monopoly of the Baltic, saw in this invasion an act of sheer aggression on the part of Prussia. They immediately intervened, and the army was withdrawn. German annoyance was aggravated by various small Danish naval successes, which neither Prussia nor the Federal Assembly had any means of preventing, and, again, by the terms of a seven months' armistice concluded on August 26. Three weeks later there were serious popular outbreaks in Baden, and in Frankfurt, where the deputies had to be protected by Prussian troops. The return of the army to Berlin gave Frederick William the weapon he needed against the Prussian Parliament. With the capture of Milan by Radetzky (August 6) and the rout and massacre of the Viennese democrats by Windischgrätz (November 1), the reaction was triumphant in Vienna. The shooting of the German Liberal leader and envoy, Robert Blum, on the latter occasion, was an open insult to the Frankfurt Assembly and its constituents. A month later the present Austrian Emperor came to the throne which he owed to Slavonic bayonets—Croat, Bohemian, and (in Hungary in the following summer) Russian. On December 5, the Prussian Parliament was dissolved; and on the 10th the French Republic received its deathblow by the election of Louis Napoleon as President.

While the last sands of '48 were thus running out, the federal deputies at Frankfurt were plodding through details of the constitution. On October 27, they decided that only German populations should be included within the desired Germanic body: a characteristic piece of academic nationalism which was, unfortunately, bound to anger both Prussia (on the score of her Poles, in Posen)

and Austria (most of whose subjects were non-Teutons). The dilemma—to admit the whole Austrian Empire, and so renounce a pure German unity ; or to create a smaller homogeneous federation, from which the Germans of Austria must be excluded—gave rise to a genuine two-party division, the Great Germany party favouring and the Little Germany opposing union with Austria. Neither, it will be seen, attained to the grandeur of Arndt's lyrical ideal—"What is the German's fatherland? . . . As far as sounds the German tongue"—because, though language is an important factor in nationality, political frontiers cannot be defined by this condition. The frontier question involved in this case the question of the central power. If Austria were included, this must evidently fall to the Emperor, as the greatest German ruler ; otherwise, to the King of Prussia. Thus the Great-German naturally became an Austrian, and the Little-German, headed by Gagern, a Prussian party, though the former were also supported by the extreme Left, and the latter by many Liberals who were far from loving the Philistines of Berlin. The Prussian party had a small majority ; and on March 28, 1849, the King of Prussia was invited to become hereditary "Emperor of the Germans."

If Frederick William IV had been worthy of this opportunity, there might have been no punishment of "blood and iron" for the next generation. But nothing could cure his subserviency to Austria : Germany, without Austria and Trieste, he once said, would be like a face without a nose. "His vain and narrow temper had been hardened by the successful counter-revolution in Berlin ; and he haughtily rebuffed the Frankfurt envoys. Crowns, he said, were for him and his peers to give,

not to take from any gathering of mere commoners. The Parliament stuck to its guns ; and its constitutional scheme was accepted by a large majority of the States. The Kings of Bavaria, Württemberg, Saxony, and Hanover would not agree, however ; Austria recalled her deputies from Frankfurt ; and the King of Prussia definitely refused the offer made to him. The last word of a thwarted people was spoken in May, 1849. Revolutionary governments were proclaimed in Baden and the Palatinate. The barricades were kept up for several days in Dresden, and the King fled to the fortress of Königstein. There were smaller risings in several provinces of Prussia. The Baden insurrection, being largely supported by the army, was not suppressed till near the end of July. Meanwhile, the Rump-Parliament had transferred itself to Stuttgart, and had then been dispersed by the Württemberg Government.

While throughout the Fatherland the last ashes of revolt were being trodden out—America received some of its best new blood at this time—and while Austria was still embroiled in Italy and Hungary, the Prussian Government indulged in a little essay in federation of its own. A conference of envoys of the German States, set up in Berlin to examine the now only too well-known constitutional dilemma, formulated a project of federal union under Prussia, to be supplemented by an alliance with Austria. This simple and obvious solution was accepted by seventeen State Governments. Again Austria and the four Kings refused. A body of deputies of Prussia and the small States in agreement with her—the Erfurt Parliament of April, 1850—adopted the scheme. The dissenting States proposed a Federal Assembly composed of equal numbers of Austrian, Prussian, and other German depu-

ties. This Prussia refused: Finally, Austria demanded the re-establishment of the old Confederation, with its Diet at Frankfurt, and all the pre-'48 paraphernalia of police coercion and arbitrary officialdom. Only one thing was more agreeable to these obscurantists than standing still; that was moving backward. The Hessian crisis, already noticed, which brought Austrian and Prussian troops face to face, threatened an immediate trial of strength between the leaders of the reaction. The Liberals, unable to accept the only practicable plan of national unity because it lacked any democratic quality, were utterly broken; but the royal obscurantist of Berlin was in no position to rejoice. For love of Austria and the Austrian idea of rule, he had refused a national crown; the knaves paid him the fool's reward. Meeting at Olmütz, in Moravia, whither the Austrian Court had removed, on November 28, 1850, Schwarzenberg and Manteuffel agreed upon a transaction under which the Federal Constitution of 1815 was restored, and the two States were to act together with regard to Hesse and Schleswig-Holstein, and to arrange for discussion of the federal problem by the princes concerned. The still resisting people of the Duchies were duly suppressed by Austrian troops, Prussia consenting, and were handed over to Denmark. Under pressure, especially of England and Russia, this temporary settlement was guaranteed by the London Convention of 1852. It is worth noting that Queen Victoria showed a high statesmanship throughout this question, and was only overborne by Lord Palmerston after repeated protests.¹ The federal fleet of

¹ *Letters of Queen Victoria*, vols. II and III. The Prince Consort wrote to his brother, the Duke of Coburg: "The poor Schleswigers have to pay for everything, even for the sins of our Angel

fifteen small ships was put up to auction, the Berlin Government buying most of them.

In the dictionary of Prussian patriots, the word Olmütz stands to this day for a shameful and unpardonable disaster.

III. THE FREE TRADE BASIS OF MODERN GERMANY

Political history is a delusion and a snare if it be not constantly related to the less apparent yet essential facts of economic life. The annals of the State may afford a valuable register of the condition of its people, or they may be so misused as utterly to falsify historical values. To the mass of the Russian people, who are peasants, the village policeman is more important than the Tsar, and the system of land tenure than the whole of the work of the Imperial Duma. Even in industrial England, the price of corn is so influential that the national marriage-rate fluctuates in sympathy with it. Except in very compact communities, a considerable inefficiency in the central government may, under favourable economic conditions, be borne with indifference ; and, on the other hand, an ideal government cannot compensate its subjects

of Foreign Affairs [Palmerston], who has brought back with the Protocol the lost friendship of Russia and France at the expense of Germany, and so has settled the Greek business [Don Pacifico]. Germany only gets her deserts if she is despised abroad, but woe to them whose fault it is." Quoted by Morier from *Denkwürdigkeiten*, Herzog E. von Coburg.

for the injury arising from one of the periodic trade crises by which the modern world is plagued. This does not mean that polity is unimportant : far from it. However imperfectly, a people is reflected in its Government—an up-standing race in a democracy, a tame race in a despotism. But polity is only one side of the commonwealth ; and public, like private, life proceeds unevenly, depending on checks here and compensations there ; so that it is difficult to make any total or strike any average that will show one people indisputably superior to another. Nevertheless, vulgar as patriotic pride often appears, there is a germ of truth and health in it. Nations differ of necessity, not by accident ; and there is as much ground for presuming the path each takes to be, for itself, the best, as that any river finds the easiest way to the sea.

The important thing for the impartial student to understand is how nations differ, and why. Thanks to her insularity, to the fact that the custom of national representation was established and serfdom was abolished before the days of standing armies, thanks to her early limitation of royal power, the evolution of the party Cabinet system, and the continuance of internal peace since 1745, England has been able to teach the world much of political expedients. Having laid up capital in two centuries of oversea trade, she was also able to throw a mass of private wealth and public spirit into the new channels opened by the Industrial Revolution, and to become the first great international workshop and market. In nearly every respect, Germany's record is the opposite of this ; yet she has arrived at length at a magnificent result. Her political history is full of failure and futility ; yet she is in the forefront of industrial

nations. She has got a certain national unity, though not of the kind she desired; she has won something, though not enough, of political liberty. How did she gain so much, and why did she fail to gain more? The latter question must wait till we understand how, amid a half-century of political stagnation, the material strength was gathered which Bismarck was to seize and wield in the name of "blood and iron."

A century ago, three-quarters of the people were occupied in agricultural pursuits; little more than a quarter are now so engaged. The very lateness and slowness of this development, as compared with that of England, implies two great social advantages. At every stage of her passage toward industrialism, Germany has been able to profit by western examples; and the dislocation of existing habits and processes which plunged England into the distress of the Chartist period has here been greatly softened. A certain communal spirit, rooted in Teutonic history, has always modified the crass stupidity of German absolutism; and the worst excesses of the reaction under Metternich did not produce the universal suffering that arose from the selfishness of English landlords expressed in the Corn Laws. Comparative figures of wheat prices from 1771 to 1909 in England and in Berlin, collected from official sources by Dr. Karl von Tyszka, speak eloquently on this point. At the earlier date, Germans paid only three-quarters as much for their corn as Englishmen. After the abolition of the export subsidy, British prices fell until the time of the Continental blockade. During the Napoleonic wars they rose to double the Prussian price. The Corn Law of 1815 prohibited imports under 80s. a quarter. The result may be shown as follows:—

ENGLAND.					BERLIN.
		<i>(Per Thousand Kilog.)</i>			
1816	360s.	.	.	.	219 mk.
1817	445s.	.	.	.	300 mk.
1818	396s.	.	.	.	253 mk.

Something like this proportion ruled until the abolition of the British Corn Laws in 1846. Cheap food was the first element of strength in the period of German recovery.

A second and even more important order of advantages arose from the quiet, unsensational, but irresistible progress of the free trade idea. Not only had each of the thirty-nine independent States of 1815 its own customs-houses, with its own tariff and revenue laws, often widely different and always vexatious. The larger States were not fiscally unified; Prussia, for instance, had sixty-seven different local tariffs, including nearly 2,800 classes of goods. There is a disposition among those who have been most deeply impressed by German academic thought, and who imagine the very concrete State of to-day as, in Lord Haldane's words, "based on foundations of abstract knowledge," to read marvellous deliberation and conscious design into the measures by which the primitive economy of a century ago was slowly abolished. The element of truth in this idea may easily be exaggerated. Why should "abstract knowledge" give so sagacious a result in the sphere of business, and be impotent in politics? Prussia adopted free trade long before England because the consolidation of her patchwork of provinces was urgently necessary for every interest, from the humblest to the highest; because the heel of the conqueror is a great spur to reform; and because the forces of reaction passed over this field. But none here achieved a work of popular education like that carried through by Cobden

and Bright. The name of no world-famous sovereign or statesman is associated with the blessed revolution which gradually extinguished this fiscal anarchy. Yet, if they got their deserts, Bülow, Maasen, Motz, and Eichhorn, the founders of the Zollverein, would be counted as high as any in the list of the makers of United Germany.

The tradition of paternal encouragement of trade aided them. The merchant guilds and the free cities in which that tradition had been most finely expressed were ruined by the Thirty Years' war; but it was revived in more modern form and to good effect by Frederick the Great, so that the dawn of the nineteenth century found mining, metal, and textile industries flourishing beside a robust agriculture. The Napoleonic embargo and blockade had trained hosts of expert smugglers; even in 1840, McCulloch (in the Supplement to his *Dictionary of Commerce*), glorifying the Cobdenite wisdom of the Prussian administration, remarks that, "if the whole Prussian army were employed to watch the frontiers, it would be utterly impotent to prevent the territories of the league from being deluged with such over-taxed commodities as were in demand by the inhabitants." The landowners need not fear free imports, because they had a large surplus of agricultural produce to export, and they wanted cheap machinery. The few manufacturers could not object, because they were far from being able to supply the market. The shipping interests of the Baltic favoured freer trade; the special interests of different towns urgently required opportunities for wider exchange. It was of great importance, if no real progress could be made toward political unity, that, at least, friction between German States should be reduced. Metternich, wrapped

up in his work of coercion and intrigue, and altogether ignorant of economic life, never had the wit to see that the progress he forbade in one direction was proceeding in another. So the moderate free trade principles laid down in Prussia in the first decade by Stein and Hardenberg, partly, at least, under the influence of Adam Smith, were enacted during the second, with the hope expressed that England would soon follow suit, and the pious intention, announced in the Cabinet Order of August 1, 1817, that foreign goods should be imported under the lightest duties "for all time." Waterway tolls and provincial duties had already been abolished; and on January 1, 1819, the most liberal measure of the time, the Prussian Customs Act, establishing a single low tariff and a single administration, came into force.

The example was immediately extended. In 1819, the principalities of Schwartzburg-Sondershausen and Rudolstadt reluctantly entered the Prussian Customs Union, the arrangement being that receipts should be shared in proportion to population. A Commercial and Industrial Association for Central and South Germany, founded at Frankfurt under the presidency of Professor Friedrich List, of Tübingen, afterwards the famous exponent of the "national economy," declared its ultimate aim to be universal free trade. For long the central and southern States refused to compromise their independence. At last, in 1828, a treaty was negotiated with the Grand-Duchy of Hesse-Darmstadt, which retained some appearance of equal standing. Simultaneously, Bavaria and Württemberg constituted a Southern Customs Union, and a short-lived central combination was formed. The northern and southern groups were definitely united in 1833, when Saxony and the Thuringian States joined

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them. Britain and France tried to check the movement by negotiating with the smaller States. Austria, which might have interfered with effect, did not understand what was happening. In 1834, the Zollverein included eighteen States, with a population of twenty-three millions; in 1840, twenty-three States, with a population of twenty-seven millions, and yet a smaller frontier than that of Prussia alone in 1818. Brunswick joined in 1841, Luxemburg a year later, and Hanover in 1851. Austria stood outside the union; but from Stettin to Munich, and from Aachen to Tilsit, there was, at length, a real Germanic unity, a vast and fruitful area in which goods could circulate without hindrance, and the extension of railways, canals, posts, and banking and commercial arrangements had a sensible basis. "

The gradual destruction of fiscal separatism in Germany, with its now almost incredible network of tariff barriers, was, in fact, a work of free trade almost commensurate in magnitude with that which was being pursued simultaneously across the continent of North America. The country was predominantly agricultural; its small export trade consisted chiefly of foodstuffs, especially grain, and raw material, together with the products of home industries. The few manufacturers who, at the outset, opposed the movement of unification were abundantly compensated in the extension of their home market by the rapid growth of population; and imports gradually changed from fully manufactured goods to raw and half-manufactured materials and colonial products. The political current of affairs strengthened the free trade tendency of the time. So long as they exported, the agricultural class were strongly in favour of a low Zollverein tariff, especially on the cheap English machinery

they needed. It was an important part of the policy of Prussia to maintain the contrast between the high protectionism of Austria and the low tariff of the Northern Customs Union. Thus, when, in 1851, Austria made a belated attempt to seduce the lesser States from Prussian leadership, neither the demands of the iron and cotton trades for defence against English "dumping," nor the academic plea of List for an increase of productive power by the nursing of infant industries, was allowed to weaken the appeal for loyalty to Berlin. Once more, geographical position decisively affected the course of events. Most of the German States had no seaboard; Austria could not offer maritime facilities like those of Prussia. In the morning of the era of the steamship and transatlantic communications, when the Hanse ports were hoping to recover something of their former greatness, this became a commanding factor. It gave a solid basis for Prussian leadership in a Germanic union such as the bayonets of Roon and Moltke alone could never have made.

In February, 1853, Austria recognized the force of facts by negotiating a commercial treaty with Prussia; and, a few weeks later, the Zollverein was renewed for a period of twelve years. It now included a population of thirty-five millions. Cobden's treaty establishing lower duties and "most favoured nation" treatment between England and France stimulated free trade feeling throughout Western Europe. At the end of 1862, a Franco-Prussian Treaty on the same lines was completed (as Bismarck afterwards declared, chiefly as a weapon against Vienna), and, despite Austrian opposition, was forced on the Zollverein. In 1865, "most favoured nation" treaties were negotiated with Britain, Belgium, and Italy, leading to considerable reductions of the federal tariff,

especially on manufactures. The war of 1866 did not interrupt the working of this beneficent machinery ; but, after the incorporation of Hanover, Hesse-Cassel, Nassau, and Frankfurt in Prussia, and the establishment of the North German Confederation, in 1867, the constitution of the Union was radically modified. A Customs Parliament was now formed, consisting of the North German Federal Council and Reichstag strengthened by representatives of the South—Bavaria, Württemberg, Baden, and Hesse. In addition to customs, some other fiscal business was given to it ; and its decisions were henceforth made by majority, the veto of single States being abolished. About the same time, the North German postal system was federalised, and other economic reforms were enacted ; shortly afterwards a uniform decimal system was established, and the coinage was placed on a gold basis. On the establishment of the German Empire, after the Franco-German War in 1871, the Customs Parliament was merged in the new Reichstag. In 1882-5, the city republics of Hamburg and Bremen, except their ports, which remained free, were brought, despite strong opposition, within the Union ; Bremerhaven, Cuxhaven, and Heligoland are also free ports. With these and one or two other trivial exceptions, the Union includes every part of the territory of the Empire, and, in addition, the independent State of Luxemburg.

Till the morrow of the great war, Bismarck stood, in Schäffle's words, as " the political guardian and favourite of the Free Trade party." In 1873, the duties on iron were greatly reduced ; and in 1877 they disappeared, only about 5 per cent. of all imports being left subject to duty. We shall see presently how the present protectionist system came to be established, and with what

results. But the value of fifty years of economic liberty are beyond valuation. The least that can be said is that the German Empire, as we know it, was founded, in wiser days, upon free trade.

CHAPTER VI

THE BISMARCKIAN TRANSFORMATION

I. RETROSPECT : THE JUNKER'S PROBLEM

STANDING now upon the threshold of the Germany of our own time, it will be well, before we seek the better acquaintance of the grim giant who awaits us within, to look backward over the ground traversed, and to recall some of the chief ideas we have gathered in course of the journey.

We saw, at the outset, this main expanse of central Europe partially unified by climate, by the northern and north-western trend of its chief rivers, and by opportunity for the exchange of a great variety of native products ; but divided by numerous mountain masses, by the contrast between its sunny Alpine South and its hard Northern plain, the latter its only seaboard, and by the perpetual liability to invasion through its open frontiers. This physical basis of the opposed tendencies toward particularism or unity, which are so important in German history, is complicated by one set after another of human factors. The Teutonic tribes settle slowly between two areas of disturbance—the wild, heathen north and east, and the Roman-Christian west and south. Both influences are favourable to the development of a martial spirit already sufficiently robust, though modified by the customs of primitive democracy, and by a certain heroic

sentimentality. Both influences are favourable to the rise of small, greedy, violent rulers; and their meeting produces a bastard growth of fighting clerics and pious robber-knights. Christianity, with its sure gravitation, penetrates the mass, gradually sunk into serfdom; something of Italian luxury reaches the ducal courts.

Over the vast extent of this land, amid its scattered and isolated communities, except for a few years in many centuries a general German monarchy cannot establish itself. The unity which is gradually attained is not of a national character, but at once narrower and wider—local, and cosmopolitan. It is an unstable equilibrium of three competing orders. Politically and religiously, it is the Holy Roman Empire, with its dual power of Emperor and Church; economically and legally, it is the Feudal system, with a balance of power between the great nobles (including the clerical princes) and the Emperor. In theory, there is a perfect harmony of these three centres of government, and a perfect obedience of the common mass to the double hierarchy. In practice, the harmony is far from perfect. The Emperor rises above the Roman See; then the Popes dominate the Empire. The nobles control the election of the Emperor, but are themselves divided into warring factions; the only unquestioned authority is their local territorial rule. Thus, at the close of the Middle Ages, when England and France, both State and people, were effectively unified and ready for expansion, Germany consisted of a congeries of 362 States, secular and ecclesiastical, of eighteen different kinds, scattered over a territory nearly twice as large as France and four times the size of England. Such a polity proved disastrously feeble when subjected to the pressure of new needs and ideas; but in contemplating

its painful decay we must not forget that it nurtured a high civilization, a fruitful variety of local life, especially in the cities, which were practically small republics, and a splendid growth of art and humane letters. Centuries afterwards, Germans would look back to this as the noblest era of the Fatherland.

A three-fold revolution—economic, intellectual, and military—shook the ancient fabric to its foundations, and gave birth to a new world. Money, maritime adventure, and the change of the great trade routes first stimulated municipal and commercial life, then left Germany stranded on her neglected highways. Printing popularised the new learning, the lore of humane scholars and the questions of the theologians setting up currents of thought fatal to a corrupt and extortionate priesthood. Gunpowder, which in the western and northern monarchies strengthened the central State, here did but give new opportunity for greedy enterprise to great nobles anxious to be freed from the quasi-monarchy of Vienna, and keen for the pillage of the estates of the Church. Two and a-half centuries separate Luther from Napoleon and the end of the old Empire; a time of constant warfare, of more than a dozen wars in which mercenaries, French, Swedish, Danish, Swiss, Spanish, Hungarian, Polish, as well as German, drive the plough and draw the harrow across and across the luckless vales of central Europe. Amid horrors unprecedented of slaughter and devastation, famine and disease, new types of statecraft, new methods of conquest are evolved. For stretches of time, civilization has been submerged; long after the apparent recovery, deep marks of weakness are left in the German character. The glories of the mediæval cities are departed. What remains of vigour in the small middle

class, having no outlet in public affairs, finds refuge in a renaissance of scholarship and letters ; but even this is marred by the evident effects of war, oppression, poverty, and social disintegration. Philosophy and theology thrive on oatmeal ; but plastic art requires the support of a prosperous community in which taste and ideas have been well-nourished. The world's greatest musicians must live in exile, in London, Paris, or Vienna. The very elaboration of philosophic thought measures the poverty of social life, as the course of its development shows the influence of despair in face of an obscurantist rule. Literature reaches its height in the aristocratic cosmopolitanism of Goethe ; in its more popular and patriotic schools, the native gift of pathos is too often spoiled by morbid traits. Politically, it is a sterile age of stupid sovereigns and cowed subjects. Serfdom is only abolished (by royal decree, not by popular demand) under compulsion of Napoleon's initiative and military needs.

After Waterloo, there is a breathing space, a generation of peace, of slow moral and material recovery. For a moment, vast free horizons seem to open before a people too long inured to horror and privation. There is the beginning of a national consciousness. The twin demand for unity and constitutional freedom, at first arising only from the universities, is echoed more widely and insistently. This boon is refused ; but another, unasked for, is granted. The Prussian Government, in high politics brainless and incompetent, rises unconsciously, almost, we may say, accidentally, to the high wisdom of abolishing the many barriers to internal trade and of adopting a single low tariff ; then tentatively negotiates with some small neighbours for an extension of the liberated area ; and finally builds up

the Zollverein, with its Parliament and its uniform low duties—a creation as respectable as, and more directly beneficial than, Bismarck's ironside Empire, though no *Denkmal* or *Lobgesang* echo its authors' fame. Political and economic reform rarely come together. In the case of Prussia, at least, the success of the free trade measures, as of the educational system which was first planned to support the bureaucracy, went to the credit of the authoritarian State. These benefits fell for the most part to the commercial and professional classes; and they could not but soften the nascent spirit of political reform where alone it had taken a strong hold. In England, political reform worked together with trade-unionism and co-operation at the structure of prosperity which free trade and the beginnings of popular education capped. In Germany, trade-unionism and co-operation did not yet exist; education was pledged to respect its official authors; democracy was a vague and academic ideal, with no root in modern popular experience.

The thirty-nine States that emerged from the Napoleonic deluge had been marshalled for a generation by Austria against any movement toward popular power. The Bund was well described in a memorandum prepared for Queen Victoria by Sir Robert Morier as "an oppressive machinery for arresting the growth of free institutions, a mutual insurance society for the absolute prerogatives of the rulers." Of the middle-class Liberals in '48, only an academic minority were in earnest; these were without experience in statecraft, and separated among themselves, separated from the governments, and not less separated from the masses of the people. Trying to explain the connection between the subsequent growth of

Socialism' and the national character, Professor Werner Sombart says: ¹ "Your German is a born doctrinaire. He has a fondness for theorising and systematizing which makes it easy for him to master the intricacies of the Marxian world of thought, and then, like the great believer in dogma that he is, not to swerve from the system when once it has been accepted. He is attracted by 'the principle of the thing.' It is characteristic of the people 'of poets and thinkers,' and also, it may be added, of schoolmasters, that the programme of a party of radical opposition commences with an extract from a treatise on sociology . . . While the Germans have this love of theoretic speculation, they lack that practical spirit which distinguishes the Englishman and American . . . I believe the Germans are the most submissive people on the face of the globe; and, as for being aroused, they have not the capacity for it. At most, any feeling of dissatisfaction is expressed in some satirical poem or learned controversial pamphlet. In action—never. The only revolution which the Germans attempted, that of 1848, has, with the exception of, perhaps, one or two incidents, a distinctly comic aspect to all those who possess a sense of humour; and, despite all revolutionary phraseology, it was a very tame affair. One need but look at the caricatures and the comic papers of the time to see that the helmets of the heroes were only nightcaps." Without taking this diagnosis too literally, we may ask whether

¹ *Socialism and the Social Movement*, p. 171. Cf. Prince Hohenlohe's remark that the Schleswig-Holstein question arose "first from the fact that the German is by nature a lawyer, and that legal questions always arouse the keenest interest—so much so that in some parts of Germany litigation is the farmer's one amusement in his spare time." *Memoirs*, i, 133.

• 198 THE BISMARCKIAN TRANSFORMATION

some such result was not natural, even inevitable, especially in northern Germany, sixty years ago.

Society, deeply divided by religion and by class, was still to a great extent isolated in small; widely-scattered centres. The few intellectuals travelled more, and found common interests everywhere; but among the mass the Bavarian remained the same jolly Bojar as of old; the Frank of the central Rhineland differed deeply from the Brandenburger, from whose blood the touch of the Slav did not disappear. Every State had a long tradition of independence which was stubbornly defended by its Court and bureaucracy, and favoured by other classes wherever a comfortable degree of freedom was allowed. Paternalism was entrenched in social custom, as Protestantism in religious habit. Intellectual life, patronized here, persecuted there, was never permitted to grow as a function of society, to project itself into public affairs. The schools and universities fed it with masses of new recruits; but the stream of ability thus created had no large outlet, and stagnated in a thousand backwaters. England presents in every respect an antithesis. Without the stimulus of a hundred little culture-centres, without any system of State instruction, her activities swept powerfully along in a few great channels. Every constituency offered a ladder to the supreme height of the House of Commons; every political association would carry its platform, if need be, into Hyde Park. Lancashire and Yorkshire concentrated the inherited skill of a million operatives upon two or three industrial processes, building up not only a world-market, but a system of democratic combination. With ships upon every sea, and continents crying for the spade, opportunities and rewards, if unequal, were abundant, and all the horizons were open to the poorest man.

It was a universal premium on initiative and bold personality, if also, on the smug ethic of Mr. Samuel Smiles. In Germany, the level of instruction must have been immensely higher.¹ Literature and philosophy, just because they offered the sole fields for the play of wits, exercised a wider influence upon the popular mind. No sudden plunge into machine industry forced the pace of political development. In the large cities, especially those nearest to France, the working-class was becoming affected by vaguely Socialistic ideas; a few newspapers (conspicuously the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung*, edited from June, 1848, to May, 1849, by Karl Marx), struck boldly the democratic note, and the universities never failed to keep alive the spark of the progressive spirit. But it would be generally true to say that the liberals and reformers were doctrinaires, apt at systematic speculation, but weak in the practical sense, stubborn independence, and power of initiative that have always made British rebels such awkward subjects.

As surely as nature abhors a vacuum does a situation like this cry aloud for its appropriate Man. And here he

¹ Even in 1886, in his famous Report to the Education Department, Matthew Arnold said: "Along with the fuller programme and longer course of German schools, I found a higher state of instruction than in ours. The methods of teaching are more gradual, more natural, more rational than in ours. They teach less mechanically and more naturally . . . The higher one rises in a German school the more is the superiority of the instruction over ours visible. Again and again I find written in my notes, *the children human*. They had been brought under teaching of a quality to touch and interest them, and were being formed by it . . . In the specially humanizing and formative parts of the school work, I found a performance which surprised me. The instruction is better because the teachers are better trained; and the instruction as a whole is better organized than with us." Of course, the comparison would be differently drawn to-day.

is, when the hour sounds—energy incarnate, a will like a hammer, an eye looking straight forward to a clear end—Otto Eduard Leopold von Bismarck. Woe to doctrinaires and weaklings who cross the path of this man in the days that are coming.

In '48 he was thirty-three years of age, already firmly set upon the official ladder, a tall, strong figure, stern grey-blue eyes set in a rather heavy face, a fine nose, heavy moustache, thick neck, hands folded behind his back, waiting, as it were, for a summons he would meet with calm self-confidence. Son of a long line of Prussian soldiers and bureaucrats, the Squire of Schonhausen was misdoubted by the few who knew him for his wild youth and overbearing temper. He had been placed at six in a Berlin boarding-school, a prison whose "sham Spartan" régime he afterwards satirized; had then passed through the gymnasium without any particular distinction; and at seventeen was one of the hardest beer-drinkers and most daring duellists in Göttingen University. Nevertheless, he took his degree in law, became an official reporter in one of the Berlin law-courts, and was presently transferred as referendary to Aachen, where he passed a year in military service. At twenty-four, concluding that he was not destined to be a bureaucrat, he returned to the paternal estate in the dull, flat Elbe-land. At first, his reckless riding, practical jokes, and other escapades won him the name of *der tolle Junker*. But he reclaims the estate from neglect and, in his marriage with Joanna von Puttkamer, insures a long and continuously happy family life. Then the call comes to him, as it did to Cromwell, the call, however, of tyranny, not of freedom. As a substitute-deputy in the Prussian Diet of 1847, he first revealed the future champion of Prussian supremacy and

divine-right monarchy. We have a passing glimpse of him at this time, as one of the founders of the *Kreuz Zeitung* (still a leading Conservative organ), already, perhaps, discovering in the printing press one of the most powerful of his future weapons. In the following year, he was all for armed repression, only to be comforted when Frederick William IV refused the Imperial Crown offered him by the Frankfurt Parliament. The revolutionists were knaves or fools; free speech was the bellows of a democratic inferno. The temper of the moment was set against his Junker notions; but little cared he for ridicule, or the nicknames that have often blossomed into titles of honour. Moreover, he had two other capacities—humour and patience. It is a vast thing, very rare on the other side of the political hedge, to be able to laugh and wait.

Olmütz he could bear no better than others; yet he accepted in 1851 the royal nomination to the resurrected Federal Diet, and for seven years occupied himself at Frankfurt in exhibiting the potential virtues of Prussian leadership against the background of the actual vices of Austria's predominance. Incidentally, he exhibits also the way of a man among an assembly of mannikins. The Austrian president alone has been accustomed to smoke at the sittings. One day Bismarck calmly draws a cigar from his pocket, and asks his Excellency for a light. Breathless astonishment among the mannikins! This is a triviality; and it is not to be supposed that our Pomeranian Squire is yet full in front of the footlights. But there is in his dispatches a fresh energy and insight, in his conversation the brusque directness of a fearless mind. "I flatter myself," he wrote to his sister, Frau von Arnim, "that I have gradually brought the Diet to a piercing

knowledge of its absolute nothingness. Heine's well-known song, *O Bund, du Hund, du bist nicht gesund* ('Oh Diet, thou dog, thou art not well') will soon be unanimously adopted as the German national anthem."

Does it seem a puzzling thing that he combines the narrowest and most old-fashioned views with a bitter scorn of the old-fashioned way of giving effect to them? Perhaps this violent instinct towards a new political method sometimes puzzles even himself, for he is momentarily drawn towards Lassalle, the romantic Socialist who dreamed of becoming a German Garibaldi. The diplomats of the time are, for Bismarck, charlatans or imbeciles, the Ministers little better. He must recognize how much Hohenzollern imbecility has contributed to this result; yet his thoughts centre more and more upon two ends—to establish royal autocracy in Prussia, and Prussian supremacy among the German States. Impeccable Conservatives had long foretold the breakdown of the old system.¹ Change must come; how can it be rendered innocuous? Gradually it dawns upon Bismarck's mind that one part of the national demand may be used to sterilize the other; the cause of national unity may be so directed as actually to extend and consolidate the power of Prussian Junkerdom. This aim defines the opinions by which he will hold through forty years of

¹ In June, 1844, Prince Hohenlohe wrote: "There is a general want of principle and vigour, or rather of system, among the supreme administrative authorities; business is delayed, money is wanting, and the finances are in confusion . . . We do not shut our eyes to the fact that on the slightest provocation we may have a rebellion . . . It is the duty of the aristocracy to arm themselves not with sword and shield, but with the word of power drawn from science." And in January, 1845: "In the highest circles every popular desire, if it does not correspond with the wishes of the Government, is regarded as treason."

public service and mastery. Sincerely? The word is almost meaningless in statecraft. Blood and opportunity conspire to set him indubitably upon this road. He has none of the stupidity of his class; yet Junkerism is in the marrow of his bones. He is what the other side calls a "reactionary," but of a type unknown in the world of Metternich and the Duke of Wellington. He is a dogmatist, but not a bigot; an obscurantist, but not a doctrinaire. There is something in him that recalls Machiavelli's *Principe* and the greater Pontiffs, with the vast difference that he is and remains a simple-living, country-loving Prussian squire. If he had been born on the liberal side, with his indomitable will and open intelligence he might have made Germany easily the first among modern States; and, certainly, the whole history of the last generation would have been changed. But will-power is usually the distillation of ages of ruling habit, and does not belie its ancestry. What brought Bismarck to the front was his steely quality, at once strong and pliable, and his early apprehension of the fact that the government of a modern society, even one so docile, requires a trained intelligence far beyond the Hohenzollern average, and a corresponding energy and steadiness of purpose. Born to govern weaker men, he never took his destiny for granted, but prepared to learn whatever his time could teach him. From the master and the class whose privileges it was to be his life's task to preserve he learned little or nothing, from his adversaries, Austria and the reformers, not a word.

A brief mission to Vienna with regard to the Customs Union gave him opportunity to observe the chief adversary at close quarters. Had not Manteuffel's jealousy shut the Foreign Office to him, there might have been

some attempt to interfere, to Prussia's benefit and Austria's confusion, in the Crimean War. When he suggested that 60,000 men should be sent to the eastern frontier, "No," replied the King; "a man like Napoleon might indulge in adventures like that, but not I." Which shows that divine right is not everything, even in the minds of its possessors. Meeting Napoleon III about the future of Neufchatel, Bismarck coquetted with the idea of a Franco-German combination against Austria, then coolly declared that his royal master was altogether opposed to conquest. In his heart he was already convinced that Austria must be dealt with by force. "I am convinced," he had written to Manteuffel in July, 1857, "that at no very distant time we shall have to fight against Austria for our existence, and that we cannot avoid such a struggle." But, if Prussia was to reap the reward, Prussia must do the work; and that meant a long preparation. No more fine speeches, no more bungling, no more sentimentality! The mad Squire had learned that, to govern a nation, he must first govern himself, and then govern King and Parliament. His anti-Austrian view still closed the Foreign Office to him, and he would not accept the Finance Ministry. Better the Embassies in St. Petersburg and Paris, where from 1859 to 1862 he completed his measure of the neighbouring Courts, and prepared for his long, strange partnership with King William I.

II. THE WEAPON IS FORGED

In 1858, Frederick William having become irrecoverably a victim of brain disease, his brother, his junior by only two years, was made Regent of Prussia. Prince William, now sixty-one years old,* was a typically narrow, honest, matter-of-fact Hohenzollern, opinionative, gentle when not crossed, vigorous, and of a fine presence, a soldier in all his conceptions and interests. The memories of his childhood never passed from his mind. He recalled his drilling lessons, and the first commission which every Hohenzollern Prince receives at the age of ten ; the days of the flight from Berlin, when he played with poor children in the town gardens of Königsberg ; the ransom extorted by Napoleon, half of it charged on his father's estates ; the war of liberation, when he first came under fire and received a decoration from the great Tsar, Alexander I ; the trip to conquered Paris under the guidance of Alexander von Humboldt. He remembered the words of Queen Luise, the Spartan mother of the sentimental Prussians, words, for us, smacking of a time when even tragedy must walk on stilts, but for them almost inspired : " Ah, my sons, you are at an age when you can feel and comprehend the great calamity that is now visiting us. In the days to come, when your mother and queen is no more, recall this unfortunate hour in your minds, weep for my memory, as I weep for the overthrow of my Fatherland ! But do not content yourselves with mere tears. Develop your powers. . Perhaps the guardian spirit of Prussia will watch over you. Then liberate your people from the disgrace and the reproach of degradation in which it will be languishing. Endeavour to wrest back

from France the now tarnished glory of your 'ancestors. Become men, and aspire to the glory of great generals and heroes. If you had not that ambition, you would be unworthy of the name of princes and grandsons of the Great Frederick." ¹ After a romantic love affair with Princess Elisa Radziwill, which his brother the King had peremptorily suppressed, he had married Augusta, the youngest daughter of the Duke of Saxe-Weimar, an intelligent girl, who cherished the memory of having sat at the feet of old Goethe, and, without disputing the authority of her Prussian lord, found her own pleasure in drawing foreign scientists and artists to her liberal salon.

It is supposed that Prince William ordered the fatal shots, on March 18, 1848, which caused so much bloodshed in Berlin. At any rate, he was then relieved of his command, and bolted abroad in fear for his life. Afterwards, he was given the task of suppressing the revolt in Baden ; and for a time, with the nick-name of Prinz Mitraille, he became the *bête noir* of German Liberals. "Whoever wants to govern Germany must conquer it," he had said in 1849.² But power tempers these asperities. Although of a "cramped and undeveloped intellect" and very impatient of the advice of gifted men,³ he was not unaware of his own ignorance. Olmütz had sufficiently proved the incapacity of the existing Government ; estrangement from his brother and the shock of such an access of authority so late in life favoured a departure

¹ In old age, in a review at Potsdam, on the anniversary of Gravelotte, King William, "with streaming eyes," thanked his soldiers for having "avenged the memory of his mother, injured at the hands of Napoleon."

² Letter to General Natzmer.

³ Morier: *Memoirs*, i, 304-511.

from the feudal-bureaucratic reaction of the past decade. Prince William dismissed Manteuffel, and called Prince Karl Anton Hohenzollern to form what became known as the "Ministry of the New Era," a combination of moderates ("wash me but don't wet me" politicians, Morier called them) including Auerswald, Bethmann-Hollweg, Count Schleinitz, Baron Patow, and Count Schwerin. The majority consisted of two portions, the "Old Liberals," founded by Baron von Vincke, a supporter of Stein, and now led by his son—Liberal-Conservative Constitutionalists after the English model—and the "Old Prussian Party," moderate monarchists strongly opposed to the establishment of Ministerial responsibility, and anxious to see a development of German military power. It is difficult to see how a combination so thoroughly purged of the broad ideas of '48, necessarily reflecting the feebleness of electors who did as they were told by provincial officials, and in the last resort impotent against the phalanx of nobles in the Upper House, could excite enthusiasm in any quarter; but we are assured that "for the first time in Germany's constitutional history, Liberal electors and representatives took a pride in belonging to the Ministerial party."¹ Opposed to this majority were the Conservative or Junker party, open opponents not only of the 1850 Constitution, but of the Stein reforms; weak in the Lower House, but with a large majority in the Upper, and strong in Society and the administration. It demanded a modified "feudalization of landed property," restoration of rural authority, and a guild organization of industry. Between Right and Left sat the watch-dogs of the Roman Catholic Church, the

¹ Morier: *Memoirs*, i, 171, where the then constitution of Prussian parties is discussed at length.

Centre, defending clerical rights throughout the monarchy, and seeking to extend the lay power of the Church in the Catholic regions; supporting the Liberals as against a bureaucratic centralization which often threatened their own influence, but brought rather toward the Conservatives by their Austrian and Papal sympathies in the Italian struggle for democracy and independence.¹ A small Polish fraction represented the intransigence of the conquered east.

The Prince Regent—King William, as he became on the death of his brother, in 1861—was before all a soldier; but it was something more than a craze for military reorganization that now eclipsed his brief popularity, and brought him into direct conflict with the Landtag and other representative bodies. Napoleon III, Emperor of the French since 1852, and chief author of the Crimean war, had embarked upon a new adventure. In March, 1857, as we have seen, he had proposed to Bismarck a Franco-Prussian alliance against Austria, France to be compensated in Italy, and Germany in Hanover and Holstein. Disappointed here, and with some real sympathy for the cause of Italian freedom, he turned to Piedmont, and in

¹ In their manifesto of April 18, 1848, the "Central Electoral Committee of Catholics" had advocated a "strong" but constitutional monarchy, direct elections, ministerial responsibility, freedom of speech, press, association and worship, aid to the unemployed, and removal of the State veto on ecclesiastical appointments. In 1861, the Centre declared itself in favour of "Greater Germany," that is a united Germany including Austria, this end to be reached by peaceful means only. It wished to connect church and school, and to disconnect Church and State, to remove unjust privileges and bureaucratic arbitrariness. "The Centre party is open to all men of honour and good will; but it is incomprehensible how Catholics can belong to other parties." *Die Deutschen Parteiprogramme* (1844-1900) Prof. Felix Salomon, I, 53.

July, 1858, at a meeting with Cavour at Plombières, made the bargain which presently added Savoy and Nice to the territory of France. Months passed, however, without open action being taken ; and it was the aggressive action of Austria in suddenly demanding the disarmament of Sardinia that precipitated hostilities at the end of April, 1859.

Once more the immaturity, feebleness, and divisions of German opinion were exhibited. The Liberals were beginning to appreciate the spirit and significance of the Italian struggle ; and a National Verein was formed, with headquarters at Gotha, to do for Germany what the National Society had done for central and southern Italy. " It is not the present heads of affairs in Prussia, it is the Prussian State, that Germany needs," said one of their manifestoes. The southern Governments, on the other hand, were strongly drawn to the Austrian side ; and the Conservative *Grossdeutschen* organized a " Reform Union " to support them. Less than ever could Germany make an effective appearance in international affairs. Unlike Frederick William, the Prince Regent, obsessed by the memory of Olmütz, did not love his imperial cousin of Vienna ; but still less did he love Victor Emmanuel, Cavour, and their cause. He believed the Prussian army to be unequal to a serious task, yet he set it marching to the French frontier without waiting for any of the other German States ; and this apparently aimless, not to say reckless, move had an extraordinarily prompt and decisive effect. To the despair of his allies, Napoleon III forgot the costly victories of Magenta (June 4) and Solferino (June 24), when he heard of the threat on the Rhine, and hurriedly concluded with Austria the Peace of Villa Franca (July 11). On returning

212 THE BISMARCKIAN TRANSFORMATION

in her existing possessions, including Venice ; in return, the Presidency of the German Federation should be modified, while in future wars Austria should command the South German and Prussia the North German troops. Nothing came of a scheme which made as little for German unity as for Italian liberation ; but it provided a useful measure of Hohenzollern wisdom a year after Rudolf von Bennigsen and his fellows of the National Union had started their agitation for a real Germania under a Liberal Prussian leadership. They, indeed, were already learning that they must look to their own liberties ere they could offer to lead the other German States in the establishment of a liberal union. The struggle of the next few years proved them quite unequal to this preliminary task.

The Prussian army was at this time the most important unit of social organization, and, perhaps, the strongest influence upon the character of the people. There was as yet no great mass of factory life to develop independence of thought and action among the workmen, none of the bustle of crowded cities to strengthen the civilian spirit. Divided in religion, in local patriotism, and in occupation, men learned in the hard service of the barracks a common obedience to a peculiarly self-confident governing caste. Few of the seeds of free intelligence sown by the pioneer school system of Europe survived that pressure. German schoolmasters wonder what devil of self-will possesses their English pupils, as we wonder at the meekness of the Prussian people. England had struggled through the Crimean War and the Indian Mutiny, and remained the first Power in the world, without resorting to compulsory service. Prussia, a second-rate Power, had 130,000 men on the active list, and could put 400,000 on a war footing without calling

out all the reserves. This was not enough for Prince William; and, indeed, even so rigid an organism as a standing army is subject to evolutionary law. After the downfall of Napoleon, professional opinion had secured an extension of the term of military service to three years. The universal compulsion readily supported during the Great War was continued, with no exemptions except that youths having a secondary instruction certificate were allowed to serve for only one year, fitting themselves out at their own cost, and being called one-year volunteers. It was thus a system not of liability to serve, as in other Continental States, but of actual service. The standing army was then 115,000 strong; every man fit to carry arms served from his twentieth to his twenty-fifth year in this force and its Reserve, then passed for seven years into the first levy of the Landwehr, and for seven years into the second levy. The Landwehr was popular among the masses, but mis-doubted by the Court and the Staff, because the first levy, containing the mass of men in the prime of life (25 to 32) could only be put in full training in war time.

A generation later, the increase of population gave as many recruits in two years as there had been in three. Thus the insufficiency of *cadres* gradually led to a much reduced call to the colours and a two-years' service, which, in turn, produced a weaker reserve and a Landwehr consisting for the most part of married men. Once in power, the Prince Regent resolved to end this slackness. Coached by General Albrecht von Roon, Lieut.-General Helmuth von Moltke, and other officers who afterwards became famous, he evolved a double reform. Instead of 40,000, a contingent of 63,000 recruits (40 per cent. of those liable) was to be raised, and they were to be kept with the colours

for three years. The term of active service would be three years (four years for cavalry and infantry) ; service in the reserve would be extended from two to four years ; and, on the other hand, service in the third line, the Landwehr (now unified), would be ended at the thirty-second instead of the fortieth year. By this plan 450,000 men—and they would be younger and better drilled men—could be put on a war footing, with the colours or in the reserve, instead of about half as many, without touching the Landwehr, which would be reduced to 163,000 men. For these purposes new *cadres* must be created, and more money must be found. In a word, a popular, defensive was to be converted into a professional, offensive army. The mobilization of 1859 gave Prince William opportunity for a small beginning. The staffs of the Landwehr regiments then raised were kept in being, as the basis of an extended organization. The military colleges echoed with proud applause. But the full scheme required thirty-nine new regiments to be formed. On December 5, Roon was made War Minister to fight it through the Diet ; and the contest began three months later.

The question was larger than that of Hampden and ship-money, for it was one of blood-tax as well as money-tax. The proposal to revert to three-years' service was very unpopular ; soldiers like General Stavenhagen declared it to be unnecessary, and it was withdrawn. An increase of £1,300,000 in the War Estimates, for the increase of regiments, was voted as a strictly provisional measure. A fatal concession : for in a question between Prussian regiments and Prussian deputies, it is the deputies whose position tends to be "provisional." It would be so patently foolish to create regiments one year, and disband them the next, that the struggle which fol-

lowed must be read as a special phase of a larger issue, now matter of agitation throughout western Europe. To present a strong army to a feeble Government is a useless sacrifice. Junkerdom had proved itself not only sterile in home affairs, but incapable of maintaining the mere dignity of Prussia, let alone its leadership among the German States, and its international position. The country was more hostile than the deputies. If the Regent had had a less rigid mind, a compromise might have been reached. But fate intervened at this moment by carrying off his demented brother (January 2, 1861); and Prince William, now sixty-three years old, became King in form, as we should say, as well as substance—as he might have put it, by divine appointment instead of for mere earthly convenience. All the mediævalism that lies latent in the Hohenzollern nature rose to invest this change with a solemn definiteness. He was now, according to the tradition of his house, *Kriegsherr*, War-Lord, or hereditary chief of the army, in full personal right. A proclamation "To My People" at once asserted the religious character of the royal mission. Bismarck, still in the background, advised the King to crown himself, after the Napoleonic precedent. Accordingly, summoning the Chambers to the coronation ceremony at Königsberg, in October, the King said: "The sovereigns of Prussia receive their crown from God. I shall, then, take the Crown to-morrow at the Lord's Table, and shall put it on my head."¹

¹ "The extraordinary tomfooleries connected with this 'Divine Right' burlesque proved satisfactorily that what had been believed to be a mere personal aberration of Frederick William IV was 'in the blood,' and extended itself to the supposed sober-minded and simple-mannered soldier who inherited his crown." Letter from Sir R. Morier to Mr. Layard.

This was so much fuel added to the fire of public discontent. Had not the King already compromised his claim to absolute power in army matters by asking the Diet to approve his project? During the summer a new party, the Progressives (*Fortschrittspartei*, afterwards the *Freisinnige*), came into being, with a demand for full parliamentary government with ministerial responsibility, two-years' army service, liability of officials to the law, civil marriage, radical reform of the House of Peers, and a German Union under Prussia with a Federal Assembly.¹ At the elections, in December, this programme won a hundred seats, an unmistakable sign. The Old Liberals urged the King to undertake reforms. He, for his part, was falling into a state of puzzled exasperation; that the very people who, after the attempt on his life in 1861, had made the land resound with their loyalty should now question his absolute right was incomprehensible to his simple mind. Roon, a sturdy reactionary, played hardily upon his prejudices. "People have tried to intimidate your Majesty," he wrote, "by a loud outcry. All the unfortunate monarchs of whom history tells have so fared; the phantom destroyed them simply because they believed in it." In March, 1862, the Ministry was dismissed, and Prince Adolf von Hohenlohe formed a Conservative Government. Again the Lower House refused to sanction the three-years' service and the increase of military expenditure. Another election produced a still more marked Radical victory, despite official pressure on the voters. Never before had the mass of the Prussian people thus dared to defy their

¹ Salomon, i, 44-47. In the electoral manifesto of September 1863, the right of the Diet to control expenditure and freedom of the press were specially emphasized.

legitimate monarch, or a Prussian assembly to aspire to British parliamentary powers. Bismarck was in Paris, where Napoleon III was offering him an alliance, with the hint that, if it were declined, France would have to turn to Austria. Prince Hohenlohe begged the ambassador to "deliver him from this martyrdom;" but Bismarck would have the plot ripen before he took a hand in the play. However, at the instance of his friend Roon, he came to Berlin to consult with the King, who, in despair, was actually drafting a deed of abdication.

The hour had come, and the man was ready. On September 23, 1862, with Roon at the War Office, and Moltke at the head of the Staff, Bismarck entered the Wilhelmstrasse as Minister-President. The great Triad of modern Germany had started their work. Nor was a suitable clap of stage thunder lacking to the occasion. There was always a dash of the melo-dramatist, or the sensational journalist, in Bismarck's composition. As a lad, he had delighted in frightening his sister by fierce grimaces; more than once he had startled the Landtag and the Federal Parliament with a bold phrase or gesture. In his first speech after taking office, he told the Diet that the time was not come for the monarchy "to be incorporated into the mechanism of parliamentary rule as an inanimate piece of the machinery." A few days later, the never-to-be-forgotten words which were to sum up his life-work dropped out in talk with members of the Budget Committee: "It is not by Parliamentary speeches and majority votes that these great problems will be settled, but by iron and blood."

Durch Blut und Eisen! The words ran from mouth to mouth, raising a laugh here, a question there. Most of the Liberals scoffed at them as bombast of the "mad

Squire," the braggart worshipper of Napoleon, the man who would sweep away big cities as hot-beds of revolution. But there were some Liberals in high places who were deeply disturbed. Even Roon did not like this sort of talk. The Crown Prince Frederick William (afterwards the Emperor Frederick), who had married the English Princess Royal in January, 1858, had not disguised his opinion that the army question need have led to no such breach between King and people. Prince Albert, Queen Victoria's Prince Consort, who had corresponded with the King, hoping to encourage him in the constitutional path, took the same view. Queen Augusta sympathized with it ; the King's son-in-law, the Grand Duke of Baden, held it. Bismarck knew this full well—the police were already keeping him apprised of much humbler enemies¹—and, as usual, he marched straight to the attack. Returning to Berlin from the Queen's birthday party at Baden-Baden, King William found the Premier waiting for him at the railway station.

"I foresee exactly how all this will end," he replied to the Minister's report. "Down there in the Operaplatz, under my windows, they will cut off your head, and, a little later, mine."

"And then, Sire?"

"Well, then we shall be dead!" Bismarck knew his mediævalist, appealed to his obstinacy and his conviction of divine right, plied him with the mixture of worshipful encouragement, righteous exhortation, and dexterous

¹ Sir Robert Morier, who came to Berlin in 1858 as British Attaché, at the instance of the Prince Consort, and who enjoyed the friendship of Duke Ernst of Coburg, the Grand Duke of Baden, Baron Stockmar, and other leading German Liberals, was thus spied upon. He says that Bismarck thought him "one of the most dangerous persons in Berlin."

planning that was to be the basis of the commerce of these two men through twenty years of struggle together.

"So be it! But we must all die sooner or later, and can we die in a worthier manner?" Then, warming to his theme, and citing King Charles of pious memory, he showed that if he, the servant, was ready to give up his life for his master, the King must do no less to maintain his God-given rights. William I was delighted, inspired, as the follower of the Prophet when *Jehad* is proclaimed. Baden-Baden, its Liberals, and its Anglophiles, were forgotten. We may imagine the steely glint in Bismarck's eye when this great capture opened the road to his ambition. Without doubt, the words which shocked the royalties were a rallying call to the Upper Chamber, the army officers, the bureaucracy, and the supporting body of the nobility and Junkerdom. Without doubt, Bismarck whipped up the Parliamentary conflict well knowing that, for his larger purposes, he must first bring the janissaries of Prussian reaction, the effective force in the nation, not indeed to an understanding of his plans, but to a fierce class consciousness and a vigorous personal loyalty. Rightly or wrongly believing his people to be, politically, children (and their later enthusiasm in his support goes far to excuse the mistake, if it was one), he unhesitatingly refused to recognize the paper rights of the elected House, and carried on the Government for four years without a constitutionally settled budget. The King would manage things "like a good father of a family, free to render accounts later on." In fact, it was always he who managed: the master was servant, the servant master. ~~But~~ So well did King William play this part that Bismarck remained to the end his sincere and grateful admirer.

The way was not always easy. To deal with the parliamentary majority called for a ceaseless energy, audacity, adroitness. Count Schwerin summarized all this in a phrase which Bismarck disavowed, but which stuck to him: *Macht geht vor Recht* (Might is superior to Right). In fact the cap fitted. The little bullies of the old régime had had to recognize superiors whose conception of their place and duty was pious and romantic. In this abounding and resourceful giant, an altogether new type of statecraft came to light—so new that, had it not been slightly disguised with a veneer of high toryism, failure would have been certain. In June, 1863, stern decrees were issued limiting the freedom of the press and public agitation. The chief Liberal papers were silenced or suppressed. Protesting municipalities were packed with Government nominees. The public anger at these measures was faintly reflected in a speech by the Crown Prince at Dantzic, and more pointedly in a scornful letter to Bismarck, asking: "Do you suppose you can quiet men's minds by continual outrages on the sense of legal justice? The men who lead His Majesty, my most gracious father, into such ways seem to me the most dangerous of counsellors." Bismarck's reply was, substantially, that the State must be kept going, and that, of the three parts of the legislative machine, two—the King and the Upper House—were on his side. That the third part represented the great body of the people evidently would not matter, until it proved itself stronger than the other two.

In the following September, the Crown Prince had a very lively interview with the Minister. "Long years," Bismarck wrote afterwards, "have not effaced the memory of the hostile expression of Olympian majesty with which he regarded me. I see him still before me, his head

thrown back, his face red with indignation ; and I see the glance which he cast at me over his shoulder." The disdain with which he treated the heir to the throne is the best proof of the hold which Bismarck had now won over the King.

III. THE WEAPON IS TESTED

Once firmly in the saddle, he was moved, either by instinct or by the consciousness that there lay the means of solving the domestic difficulty, to attack the larger Germanic problem. Austria, under the guidance of Schmerling, having somewhat recovered from the humiliation of the Italian campaign, and having obtained a Parliament under the Constitution of February 7, 1861, was seeking to establish herself as head of a reformed Germanic Confederation. With difficulty, Bismarck persuaded King William not to attend a Diet of Princes called for this purpose at Frankfurt in the autumn of 1863. His refusal succeeded in its immediate object, but it did nothing to placate either the lesser princes or the Liberal advocates of national unity. That Germany might have been peacefully united at this time seems certain. For years past the Dukes of Baden, Weimar, and Coburg had been pressing upon Prussia schemes of federal union which erred only by their liberal character—especiall by providing for ministerial responsibility to the federal assembly. Bismarck wanted no German union on such terms ; the supremacy of absolutist Prussia was all in all to him. That end required a

larger view. Austria, Russia, France, Italy, even Denmark must all be reckoned with. Roon was hard at work with the army; but this would not be ready for several years. Meanwhile, Bismarck prepared the way.

The first act of his campaign typified his whole policy. By offering the Tsar military assistance in suppressing the Polish revolution (Convention of St. Petersburg, February 8, 1863), and mobilizing half the army on the frontier, he destroyed Gortchakoff's plan of conciliation, struck a blow against democracy, snubbed France, Austria, and England, and secured Russian neutrality in the graver issues that were to come. It might have been his last great stroke; for, exhausted by the Parliamentary conflict, at daggers drawn with half the Court, detested in France and England for his Russian policy, marked by Austria as her personal enemy, mistrusted by other German Governments, and hated by all that was liberal in the country, he seemed to have come to the end of his resources. It was at this moment that the death of King Frederick VII of Denmark, without male issue (see p. 274 ante), suddenly revived the Schleswig-Holstein question, and precipitated the action Bismarck had designed.

The people of the Duchies again demanded independence, or union with Germany under an Augustenburg prince. Encouraged by speeches of Palmerston and leaders of *The Times*, the new King, Christian IX, replied by decreeing their incorporation in Denmark. The Frankfurt Diet, driven by popular agitation, sent troops to Holstein to resist this measure. Prussia and Austria, as signatories of the London Convention of 1852, could protest against Danish aggression, but could not further the German solution. Bismarck declared himself ready to

conquer Schleswig-Holstein for Prussia, "but not for the Augustenburger," whose liberal views and friendship with the Crown Prince were a heavy handicap. He was not yet ready to defy Austria, still less to risk the intervention of France, England, and Russia. He saw, however, a line of strategy which, while it would bring obloquy upon him at the outset, would end in making Prussia supreme in the Germanic family, and giving her, along with other possessions, a strong base on the North Sea. The first step in this bold purpose was the treaty of January 16, 1864, by which Prussia and Austria agreed to attack Denmark—two great States which could put a million men in the field agreed to assault a small country of two and a-half million inhabitants—and then to settle the problem themselves. The Danes were soon overwhelmed by superior force, and Schleswig-Holstein was ceded to the two Powers. By the treaty of Gastein (August 14, 1865) the administration of the occupied territory was divided, Prussia taking the northern and Austria the southern half, while the small territory of Lauenburg was ceded to Prussia against a payment to Austria of £650,000. By a show of fidelity to the Convention of 1852, foreign interference had been evaded; and Austria was as deeply embroiled as its rival with the Duchies and their Liberal sympathisers. It remained only to cheat the partner of her share of the spoil, and then to drive straight on to a still larger prize.

Every one began to see now that Bismarck was something more than a peculiarly hardened Conservative; and when he shelved the Augustenburg claimant, Duke Frederick (father of the present German Empress), who obstructed Prussian aims, good, simple-minded German patriots began to learn, as other peoples have done, to

accept foreign conquest instead of internal freedom, and to see in the Machiavellian despot of yesterday the glorious empire-builder of to-morrow. King William recognized the astuteness of his Minister by giving him the title of Count.

The final rupture with Austria was adroitly procured. In January, 1866, charging her with provoking disloyal action in the Duchies, Bismarck announced that Prussia resumed a free hand. At a Cabinet Council in February, Moltke declared the readiness of the army, while the Crown Prince again fruitlessly protested against a war policy. Bismarck had visited Napoleon III at Biarritz in October, 1865, and had half promised compensation for his neutrality. The next step was to effect an Italian alliance. This was concluded, not without difficulty, in April, 1866, for a term of only three months. Coincidentally, Bismarck endeavoured to propitiate German opinion by proposing at Frankfurt the calling of a federal parliament elected by universal suffrage, and to detach Bavaria from Austria by proposing that the command of federal troops should be divided between Prussia and Bavaria. Both approaches were rejected. King William was, indeed, friendless in this cold-blooded quarrel. The Archbishop of Cologne wrote to him protesting; Dr. Moritz von Bethmann-Hollweg, grandfather of the present Chancellor and lately Minister of Education, begged him not to provoke French interference. He was bombarded with petitions from Prussian towns praying for the maintenance of peace; the Landwehr threatened insubordination. "The public at large and the army itself do not believe in war," Baron Stockmar wrote to ~~him~~ ^{him} at the end of March. "They think it too impossible, too absurd." It was clear that Hanover, as well as Saxony and

Bavaria, would stand beside Austria. The French Emperor negotiated with both sides, hoping to gain territory on the Rhine, but really took the defeat of Prussia for granted.

It was now Austria that was hot for war. Her northern and southern armies were mobilized at the end of April. Prussia followed suit at the beginning of May. An Austro-Bavarian proposal to mobilize a federal army to defend the independence of the Duchies was carried, and the Austrian Ambassador recalled from Berlin. Prussia at once withdrew from the Confederation, and invaded Saxony, Hanover, and Hesse-Cassel. Bismarck had not only produced a fratricidal war within the short term allowed him by the Italian treaty; he had so manœuvred that his opponents seemed to be the aggressors.

All the daring exploits and horrid carnage of this remarkable conflict between Prussia and Italy on the one hand, and Austria, Bavaria, Hanover, Saxony, Württemberg, and several lesser German States on the other, were crowded into only six weeks. Italy gained Venice from the conquered power, not by any prowess of her own, but by the good offices of Napoleon III, and as a part of the bargain with Prussia. Austria's German allies, half-hearted and disunited,¹ were easily disposed of. The chief campaign took place in Bohemia between nearly equal forces—over 270,000 men on either side. Here

¹ "To those who knew *les dessous des cartes*," says Morier, "it is no secret that Bavaria has for a long time speculated on Austria's decrepitude, and counted what articles in the sick man's inheritance she would like to have." Morier believed the ~~withdrawal of~~ Austria from Germany to be necessary, but denounced the war as an iniquity, and Bismarck as "one of the most sinister figures ever painted on the canvas of history." *Memoirs*, II, 65.

the Austrian Commander, Benedek, hoped to divide the two main Prussian armies—the one advancing through the Kingdom of Saxony under the “Red Prince” Frederick Karl and General Bittenfeld, the other in Silesia under the Crown Prince Frederick—and to defeat them in succession. The Crown Prince, however, broke through the mountains, winning several engagements, while his cousin repeatedly repulsed the poorly-led, poorly-equipped Austrians. Benedek, abandoning the offensive, fell back on Königgrätz (Sadowa), where the great battle of the war took place on July 3. One of Moltke’s strategic principles—a lesson from Napoleon—was to “march separately but fight together,” that is, to bring armies up from different points, and then direct one against the front, another against the flank of the enemy, a method calling for strict punctuality and discipline of movement. The Crown Prince was delayed in reaching the battlefield. This, however, only loosened the Austrian right-wing, which was broken into fragments when, in the afternoon, the northern army arrived. Over 44,000 Austrians were killed, wounded, or taken prisoners, while the remainder fled in disorder. The Prussians lost only 1,400 killed and 9,000 wounded.

This disparity of sacrifice was due, in the first place, to difference of armament. The Prussian army, alone in Europe at this time, possessed a breach-loading rifle, the needle-gun. Yet it was not a new weapon. Dreyse’s first model, improved in 1836, had been fully adopted in 1847, had proved most effective against the Saxon and Baden insurgents of 1848, and had been again improved in 1862. It gave as many as five shots a minute, a trivial result for to-day, but twice or thrice as fast as the breach-loader. The Prussian artillery was inferior; but, in the

" shock-tactics " which they had learned from the French in Italy, the mass charges with the bayonet upon high or covered positions, the Austrians were mowed down by wholesale. Moltke knew how to use his weapons. After the Italian war of 1859, he had had to resist an attempt to copy the French field practice. His principle was to get the enemy, if possible in open country, to attack in compact bodies, to use upon it the utmost of his infantry fire, and only then to move to the attack on front and flank. And these weapons and tactics were but the final expression of the hard will and keen intelligence of the great Berlin Triumvirate. Austria, with her proudly incompetent rulers, her empty exchequer, her fearful generals, and inadequate equipment, was suddenly exhibited to the world in the native weakness that a long and splendid history had hitherto concealed.

During the following three weeks, the Bavarians were crushed, Frankfurt was occupied, and various federal forces were defeated. On July 26, preliminaries of peace were signed; on August 23, by the Treaty of Prague, Austria withdrew from the Germanic body and admitted Prussia's right to form a North German Confederation, to annex Schleswig-Holstein, Hanover, Hesse-Cassel, Nassau, and the ancient " free city " of Frankfurt-on-Main. The Kingdom of Saxony was left untouched; and Bismarck with difficulty persuaded King William not to press for any piece of Austrian territory.¹ He was, in fact,

¹ With difficulty and even with tears! Busch reports Bismarck as saying of the discussion of July 23: " I threw myself on my bed, and I was so worn out that I sobbed aloud. They heard me in the next room, stopped talking, and came in. *It was all I wanted.* On the morrow it was too late to re-open the discussion, and so their plan was never realized." In a conversation with Prince Hohenlohe (*Memours*, I, 352), three years

already looking forward. During the negotiations, the French Ambassador had asked for the half-promised compensation in the shape of Rhenish Bavaria, Mainz, and a slice of Hesse. Bismarck had put an immense stake upon his personal estimate of Napoleon III, and the event, though by a narrow margin of time, had justified him. For ten years the Emperor had played a preponderant part in European affairs. He had had his finger in every pie, had courted England and flirted with the Tsar ; had successfully maintained the principle of nationality beyond the Alps, and had done much to further the practice of international conference. Prussia had broken his attempt to help the Poles and to obtain a *plebiscite* in the Duchies ; yet, by promising neutrality, he had enabled the Berlin Government to throw her Western troops over the Austrian frontier. But for Ministerial divisions, perpetual changes of policy due to his own illness, and disorganization of the army by the Mexican expedition, he would probably have tried interference and intimidation. Every day of the six weeks' war had carried this grave risk. The opportunity passed, however ; and, when Napoleon asked for his *douceur*, Bismarck, conscious of the strength of over 600,000 men with the colours, scornfully refused.

later, Bismarck referred to his having " let loose the Hungarian revolutionists " during the war, owing to the interference of France, and said that the early conclusion of peace was due to his fear of the extension of the revolt. He added : " People always suppose that I swam along in triumph, but I can assure you that I have never passed a more terrible time. Everybody at headquarters looked on me as a traitor, and when I stood at a high window of the castle I often thought, ' Would it not be better in the end to jump out ? ' I used often to have such scenes in the Council that I sprang up, rushed out, slammed the door, threw myself on my bed, and howled like a dog."

Not lightly. Bismarck scorned fools, weaklings, and dreamers, especially of his own blood; he often used light words; but in his heart he probably never made light of any piece upon the wonderful chess-board which in his mind the world of international politics had come to represent. Built in a rare, large mould, his nature swelled to every difficulty he met. A blind man could not take him for any of the colleagues of his labours. Tradition, custom, majesty, sanctity, aye, intellect and culture, too, were for him things to use, not to worship. "He always liked to speak of the conquests of science with the disdain of the son of the soil," says his friend Harden. Even in the science of politics which became so peculiarly his own, it was a strange instinct, rather than any sort of study, that guided his course. "I have often noticed," he once said, "that my will had already taken a resolution before my brain had ceased thinking." He is to be judged not as a thinker, but as a man of action, now supple and dexterous, now brutally overbearing; always sure of himself, and always tremendous in energy.

At rest, long afterwards, he could look at men and see in them beings of flesh and blood, not things, ideas, or cyphers. But statecraft is a sort of starvation of the soul; the Minister who comes to this toil by genius and love of struggle ends by being the worst slave in the realm. He dare not be magnanimous, and has no time for simple joy. The more he succeeds, the less can he tolerate rivals, or respect the small fry round him. The finer instincts are blunted; life becomes one long manœuvre. A good husband and father, and not unkindly in other private relations, Bismarck threw all his remarkable strength of brain, nerve, and will into the new game of dominance of which he is the inventor. He could quote Horace and

Shakespeare as well as the German classics, and enjoyed listening to music. These were momentary diversions. If he ever had any interest in the pitiful lot of the mass of men, or ever sought to peer over the edge of the world in search of the secret of life, the impulse was repressed. In the seventeenth century he might have been a Gustavus Adolphus, in the eighteenth a Frederick the Great. None knew better than he that in our time, saving royal birth or some less probable accident, the soldier must be servant and the statesman master. Though he liked to ride down the Linden in his white cuirassier's uniform and pointed helmet, hand on sword, the very picture of absolutism, he was no mere soldier, but a diplomatist wielding, for a clearly apprehended purpose, a crown, an army, and a bureaucracy in one hand, a suborned press and a parliamentary bodyguard in the other.¹

The first part of the purpose was accomplished. The régime of the Holy Alliance was at an end. Austria was driven out of the Germanic family. Prussia was re-organized, aggrandized, and consolidated. For Bismarck,

¹ Bismarck's right-hand man in the work of intrigue was at this time and long afterwards Lothar Bucher, a revolutionist of 1848, who lived in exile in London, in contact with Karl Marx, till 1859, when he was allowed to return to Berlin, and entered the official service. He afterwards undertook many special missions, and his knowledge of the revolutionary movement and of foreign affairs was specially useful to his master. In 1865 he vainly endeavoured, probably on Bismarck's instructions, to persuade Marx, then desperately poor, to join the staff of the official *Staats Anzeiger*. He is said to have drafted the Anti-Socialist Law of 1878. Mr. Spargo in his *Karl Marx, His Life and Work*, says that in 1871 Marx received from Bucher information of "secret affairs of the French and German Governments," which he conveyed regularly to the leaders of the Paris Commune. Mr. Spargo thinks Bucher was "betraying Bismarck." More probably the Chancellor wisted the communications to be made. Bucher died in Switzerland in 1892.

this had been the necessary prelude to any new federal union. German union without Prussian aggrandizement he could have had five years before, without the pains and odium of a needless war. What next? If Prussia dare devour no more, at least, for the present, she could make herself the unquestioned mistress in Germany. One great obstacle loomed ahead. France, the enemy by all necessities of history and character, the source of sedition, the would-be regulator of Europe, at once maenad and moralist—proud, wanton France must be humbled.

Before this supreme task could be attempted, a three-fold labour of conciliation must be undertaken. Austria must be kept from falling back into the arms of France. The best way to accomplish this was to regain the friendship of the South German Governments. But that would be impossible, or useless, till the German people in general, and the Prussian people in particular, had been placated. Bismarck therefore promised to base the parliament of the new Confederation upon a suffrage universal for adult males, and asked the Landtag for an indemnity for the military expenditure unconstitutionally incurred during the previous four years. Young and raw as the constitutional movement was, it was shrewd to offer this salve for the conscience of rigorous politicians. They, for the most part, were only too glad to accept the vague promise of a return to legality. Commoner minds already revolved dizzily about considerations more concrete or more sentimental. The enlargement of the kingdom opened new opportunities to the official class: the material basis of Hanoverian discontent was a material basis, also, of Prussian cupidity. More important was the general exhilaration of the national spirit. We can

only understand the revulsion of feeling by constantly recalling the miserable memories which had oppressed German life. After a century of weakness and failure the heroic chieftain, after two centuries of desolation the organizer of victory, had come. Blood and iron! The Junker's bombast had justified itself in the millions of the war indemnities, the 28,000 square miles of territory and four millions of population added to the Hohenzollern realm. In these six thrilling weeks how had the humble been exalted and the mighty laid low. Who says "Mettelnich" now? Olmütz is avenged. Take heart, ye fearful; we shall live to see that the name "Napoleon" has no more terror. Who would not bear a dose of arbitrary rule for such results? Time enough hereafter to think of academic constitution-mongering. Had Bismarck lied and cheated? The great right eclipsed the little wrong. Had he deliberately chosen to provoke a *Brüderkrieg*? The surgeon's knife is merciful. Let professors, poets, and moralists keep their places. Thwarted for centuries, the butt of all scoffers, the soft-hearted serf, henceforth German Michael shall proudly face the sun, sure of himself and his destiny.

Into the cradle of this new-born pride, second thoughts cast a shade of fear. Hanoverian plots, Polish obstinacy, the first movements of Clerical and Socialist organization, uncertainty in north and south, Napoleon's reiterated demands, all bore warning that he who chooses the path of violence must live in armour. A man will fight harder to keep something than first to get it. Mere goodness and mere learning come easiest to poor despised men. Give them "a stake in the country," or even a ribband share of military glory, and you shall see how small a thing is intellect and its moral imperatives. By no mere accident

was the philosopher of "The Will to Live" a German ; and by no accident was he led to abuse the "Government and University philosophers" of his time. For a generation Schopenhauer's hammer-blows upon the old structure of abstract thought had resounded. At last there was a new sort of Government. What more natural than that it should have a new sort of philosophy to support it? Darwinism, the idea of development as the result of struggle by tooth and claw, was undermining older and softer systems of thought. Carlyle was blowing the trumpet of great men, prominent among them Frederick of Prussia. The Utilitarians had beaten the Chartists. The late Lord Acton spoke of Sybel and Treitschke "bringing historical teaching into contact with real life, creating a public opinion more powerful than the laws, and entirely remodelling the methods of thought of the generation then springing into manhood." Events, however, are the great teachers. The old German idealism was discrowned at Sadowa. Henceforth, expediency would rule this as much as other States, and, because the spirit of government mellows only with experience, would take at first the crudest forms. Expediency, in its English home, may be set in contrast with the pursuit of philosophical truth¹; but when it represents a free and mobile balance of social interests, when it has to run the gauntlet of cultured criticism and to satisfy the demands and traditions of an old yet virile community, it is, with all its faults, something incomparably above the régime introduced by Otto von Bismarck. His daring blows and clever tricks, the poise of his spirit, his fortune and success, extort a passing admiration ; but, when we come to ourselves, we know that his *Real-*

¹ As in Lecky's *Rationalism in Europe*, II, 133.

politik could not long survive the period of transition in which it was born.

IV. THE SUPREME STROKE

Bismarck, with his steely smile, well knowing that an outburst of pride so sudden and violent could not last, and must be used quickly, was busy in his Press Bureau settling an account more important than that of the Landtag. To the correspondent of the Paris *Siècle* he showed Napoleon's offer of an alliance, in return for the Palatinate and Western Hesse, which he had induced the Emperor to put into writing. Spurred by this revelation, recognizing the exclusion of Austria as final, and fearful of worse than they had just suffered, the South German States turned to the big brother in Berlin for the only insurance policy that seemed open to them. Secret treaties of offence and defence were concluded in August, 1866, by which the armies of Bavaria, Baden, and Württemberg were to be placed under Prussian command in case of war, and all the States mutually guaranteed their territorial integrity. Hesse-Darmstadt joined them a few months later. Thus the second great step in the organization of the new German Union was achieved. It would have been futile, after this, to form the Southern Confederation foreseen by Austria and France. To a Zollverein was added a Kriegverein.

The consolidation of the aggrandized Prussian Kingdom and the planning of the North German Confederation proceeded coincidentally. The only serious obstacle to

the first object lay in the resistance of Hanoverians, Schleswigers, and Poles, represented to this day by tiny parties in the Reichstag. Frankfurt, whose burgo-master had hanged himself in despair when the Prussian general threatened that he would burn down the city if he did not get an indemnity of twenty-five million thalers, vainly protested. In the Prussian Chamber it was remarked that no professor of law now recognized the mere right of conquest ; but Bismarck refused to carry out the clause of the Treaty of Prague promising to use the French expedient of the *plebiscite*. Reluctantly King William brought himself to agree to the suppression of the small dynasties. The deposed sovereigns were heavily compensated ; the Duke of Nassau, for instance, received nearly three millions sterling. The blind King George of Hanover obstinately refused to recognize the new order. The sixteen million thalers due to him were, therefore, sequestered ; and, when he organized a Guelf legion in France, the interest on the sum was seized by Bismarck, and used for secret services, chiefly for the corruption of the press. This sum of about £110,000 became known as the Reptile Fund by a *double entendre*. Bismarck had said that he would pursue the Hanoverian reptiles to their holes ; to other folk, the reptiles were Bismarck's press agents.

During the winter, the union of the twenty-two North German States was established. Bismarck was under no temptation to withdraw the promise of universal suffrage which he had made during the war, or to deprive the lesser States of their autonomy. Universal suffrage is the necessary sugar coating of the conscription pill. It is, moreover, perfectly safe to allow a free popular election of powerless deputies. To attempt the absorption of the

lesser States would not only have been to outrage Europe and make twenty Schleswigs or Hanovers ; it would have been to make impossible the continuance of the antiquated electoral system on which Prussian absolutism was and still is based. Particularist princes and wide constituencies would keep a check upon one another. A Parliament may be recruited by the most democratic appeal, and yet be powerless ; a State may preserve autonomy in its domestic affairs, and yet lose all the substance of independent sovereignty. The constitution of the North German Bund, substantially continued in the Empire of to-day, was a highly ingenious device for affecting constitutional and parliamentary virtues, while keeping to the Prussian monarchy the essentials of absolute power. It had (and has) three organs—an Executive, with the King of Prussia as perpetual president ; a Bundesrath, or council of representatives of the federated Governments ; and a Reichstag, or assembly directly representing the whole people. The president, through a Chancellor personally chosen (Bismarck, of course), took full military and diplomatic rights, including those of making war (when it could be described as “defensive”) and peace, commanding all troops, regulating their organization, appointing commanders, naming ambassadors, and concluding treaties. At the same time, as head of the internal affairs of the Confederation, he appointed the Executive, with the right, if necessary, to march troops into any recalcitrant State. The Federal Council, with its standing committees, afforded a purely bureaucratic channel for recommendations of the lesser States to the supreme authority. Prussia held in it seventeen of the forty-three seats, Saxony four, Mecklenburg-Schwerin and Brunswick each two, eighteen other States each one.

For any change in the constitution a two-thirds majority was necessary. Finally, a Reichstag of 297 deputies (one per 100,000 of population) had the right of discussing and voting on laws and finance. But it must be convoked by the King-President, who could dissolve it; its votes only became effective with his sanction; the Chancellor, his representative, might appear before it and give explanations if he wished, but need not do so; it had no sort of control over the Chancellor or over the Secretaries of State, who were only his assistants. There was no real Ministry, only a body of royal servants. The annual votes, dear to the House of Commons, were denied from the first, military expenditure being fixed for five years (to the end of 1871).

The whole Confederation adopted the Prussian system of universal military service, with three years in the active army and four in the reserve. The chief internal matters which became a federal concern were commerce and communications, including the general regulation of railways, customs, posts and telegraphs, money, weights and measures, banking, sanitary measures, commercial, maritime, and penal law. The federal budget depended on two sources of revenue—customs, indirect taxation, and postal receipts, and proportionate contributions, called “matricular,” by each State to make up the balance. The scheme contained no statement of popular rights or liberties. It was criticized on this and other grounds, but was adopted by the Governments on February 2, by a constituent assembly (by 230 to 53 votes) on April 16, and came into force on July 1, 1867.

With the opening of a new chapter of German life, a realignment of parties became necessary. In June, 1866, the Progressives, through their central electoral committee,

had protested once more against the infringement of the budget rights of the Prussian Diet, and had connected the origin of the war with this conflict. While declaring that the war must be prosecuted, they had warned the constituencies against its being used in "the interests of dynastic policy, or for the prevention of a free Germanic union on pretext of loyalty to foreign Princes." In December, they had demanded the full unification of Germany, and the creation of a parliament with "decisive" legislative rights. All these issues were now closed, and in a sense very unfavourable to the Progressives. By a majority of three to one, the Prussian Government had got its bill of indemnity; the war had been triumphantly concluded; throughout the country there was a stampede to the Right. Out of these circumstances the National Liberal Party was born.

In the first place, fifteen members of the Progressive party united with nine "Old Liberals," and, in a manifesto, declared that, the Prussian conflict having been superannuated by the "deeds of the nation in arms," what was wanted was a strong but liberal government. To these were gradually added Liberal deputies from the annexed provinces (Bennigsen had been leader of the Liberal Opposition in Hanover), and some Liberal-Conservatives detached from the old Conservative party. The programme of the combination, upon which Bismarck was long to rely, issued on June 12, 1867, contained the following points: the Prussian Government, by asking for an indemnity, had recognized the constitutional rights of Parliament; the German Empire and German freedom must be realized simultaneously by the same means; the Budget rights of Parliament must be completed, and individual responsibility of Ministers and officials

for illegal actions must be introduced ; finally, measures must be taken to abolish restrictions on trade and industry, to abrogate the " estate " basis of representation in State, province, and commune, and the jurisdiction of the landlords, to abolish the stamp duty on publications and the system of publishers' security, and to re-organize the judiciary in a liberal direction. Over against this party of middle-class Liberal Imperialists, the remainder of the Progressive Party, the three Socialist deputies who appeared in the Reichstag for the first time in 1867 (of them we shall speak later), and the nationalist groups, stood the Conservatives, representing for the most part the landlord class, the nobility, bureaucracy, and clergy. In the south, opinion continued to be much more robustly democratic : the South German People's Party, formed in 1868, advocated disestablishment, secular and free education, labour protection laws, progressive income-tax, and other measures in advance of the time. The North German Reichstag effected, however, during the three years of its life, some notable reforms, including a uniform cheap postage system, freedom of marriage and migration, and a code of criminal law. It also decided upon the construction, by 1878, of a fleet of sixteen ironclads and fifty-five lesser ships.

Save for their military treaties with Prussia—and such arrangements are valueless when the parties cease to value them—the three southern States, Bavaria, Württemberg, and Baden, were left to take care of themselves, without even the shadow of an ancient Bund to cover their nakedness of resource. Baden was merely a liberal dependency of Prussia. Württemberg jealously rejected Bavaria's overtures for the formation of a South German Union which, beside, broke upon the fact that

the rulers would not have a Union with a Parliament, and the peoples would not have it without. But for the personal feebleness of the Bavarian monarchy, the next chapter of German history might have been written very differently. Bismarck bided his time, with an occasional tart word of warning. "As regards war with France," he told Prince Hohenlohe in April, 1868, "it was as impossible to say anything definite about it as about the kind of weather to be expected in July. The French plan of campaign was to invade South Germany with 50,000 men. Though Prussia would instantly have 200,000 men at Coblenz, and within a brief delay 500,000 wherewith to march on Paris, still it required time. If we were prepared, so much the better." A month later, "he repeated that the French could only place 320,000 men in the field, whereas North Germany could have 500,000 at its immediate disposal." And in June, 1869, he remarked that a breach of the military treaty would lead to Bavaria being partitioned between the Northern Confederation and Austria.

Thwarted in the central Rhineland, and desperately anxious, after the Mexican disaster, for some one to throw to the wolves of the Liberal and Republican opposition, the French Emperor turned northward in search of the lost "compensation." The Grand Duchy of Luxembourg had been left by the collapse of the old Germanic *Bund* a helpless fragment between Prussia and France. Its sovereign, the King of Holland, was quite ready for a transaction. Bismarck at first seemed to agree, then, when the treaty of cession was ready for signature, set his press to work up national feeling, put up Benjamins to raise the question in the Reichstag, and, at last, on the pretence of fearing public opinion, withdrew Prussia's

consent. Again Napoleon had been snubbed ; nor can the rebuff be said to have been softened by the neutralization of Luxemburg, under the treaty of London in May, 1867, involving the retirement of the German garrison. The establishment of the Customs Parliament, the military treaties with the south, the refusal of a *plebiscite* in Schleswig, the growing talk of the need of a " passage of the Main "—that is, a union of the Northern Confederation with the South German States—the renewed French tentatives toward an alliance with Austria and Italy, an attempt of France in January, 1869, to obtain control of the chief Belgian railways, and its failure, all expressed and stimulated the rising jealousy between the oldest and the youngest of Continental Powers. In April, 1868, Moltke began to prepare the plans of a Prussian campaign against France. On neither side, however, was the prospect very clear. The French elections in 1869 produced a strong minority unsympathetic to the Government ; and the Emperor, already a victim of attacks of *hematuria*, felt his hold upon affairs slackening. Austria was held back by fear of her German population and the Hungarians. Italy, irritated at the re-occupation of Rome by French troops, hesitated ; General Faily's boast after the defeat of the Garibaldians, " the chassepots have done wonders," proved fatal. On the other hand, the demand for German unity seemed to have weakened ; King William told Loftus, the British Ambassador, that it would probably remain for his grandson to realize.

The military budget was fixed to the summer of 1871. Then the veto of the Reichstag would revive. But feeling against this excessive burden still ran strong. " Bismarck sees before him the prospect of a conflict of first-rate magnitude hopelessly embarrassing to his

foreign policy," Morier wrote in April, 1870. "The anti-Prussian stream is running higher in South Germany than I have ever known it since 1866, and it is exactly on this very question of militarism that it runs so high." The ship of State, it was said, had stranded in the Main, and could get neither backward nor forward. Bismarck's relations with the King were cold and sometimes strained. But the southern States had adopted the Prussian needle-gun, Prussian instructors, and universal conscription; and, while Marshal Niel, ready as he was to rush into war, had failed to impose the rigours of Prussian militarism on the French nation, the Chancellor knew that Moltke was ready and the army equal to its task. This was the decisive fact in the situation.

He had long regarded war with France as necessary.¹ He knew that no other war could unite the German peoples; and the flirtations of Paris, Vienna, and Florence hastened without alarming him. Twice by means of the sword he had accomplished his purpose, destroyed his critics, and doubled his personal power. There is no reason to suppose that he positively preferred this way if the same end could be reached by other means. But there is good reason to conclude that he preferred and invited the arbitrament of force rather than postpone the issue to what might be a less favourable opportunity. It was only long afterwards, in the day of his own eclipse and suffering, that he would feel a momentary compunction for such a choice. Now, in the spring of 1870, in his fifty-fifth year and at the height of his powers, it is not humane

¹ Sybel: *Die Begründung des Deutschen Reiches*, VII, 36. Bismarck: *Gedanken und Erinnerungen*, II, 51, 110. Sybel did not live to discover how incompatible was his picture of Bismarck as a peace-loving statesman with the facts. Treitschke's Hohenzollernism still less bears the light of modern research.

scruples that we shall expect to find operating in this relentless mind. For what had he striven with tears to save Austria from humiliation after Sadowa, except to prepare for a reckoning with France? The legerdemain of diplomacy, from which Napoleon III had suffered successively in Poland, in Schleswig, in Bohemia, in Luxemburg, in Belgium, might give more pinchbeck results. To carry the antique chariot of the King of Prussia triumphantly across the Main would require a blow in comparison with which these were mere pinpricks. During his visit to Paris in 1867 with King William (*Ego et Rex Meus!*), two things had rejoiced the Chancellor—the ridicule of the little German Courts in “The Grand Duchess of Gerolstein” at the Opera, and the sight of Krupp’s new steel cannon in the Exposition designed to display French supremacy in the arts of peace. It was no fruit of friendship or pure admiration that the Man of Iron gathered on the boulevards of Baron Haussmann.

The origins of the Hohenzollern candidature for the Spanish throne, and the steps by which it became the ostensible *casus belli*, are still not completely revealed.¹ It seems certain, however, that if Bismarck did not first procure it, it was, after an early stage, mainly his personal work. It was in September, 1868, that the Bourbon

¹ In addition to the various memoirs of Bismarck, diaries and other remains of his assistants, Lothar Bücher, Abeken, Bernhardt, and Busch, *Aus dem Leben König Karls von Rumänien*, M. Emile Ollivier’s *L’Empire Liberal*, memoirs of General Lebrun, Count Benedetti, Lord Loftus, and *Die Thronkandidatur Hohenzollern und Graf Bismarck*, by W. Schulze, must be referred to. *Les Origines Diplomatiques de la Guerre de 1870* is in course of publication by the French Foreign Office; *La Candidature Hohenzollern* by Pierre Lehautcourt, and *La Guerre de 1870: Causes et Responsabilités* by H. Welschinger, review most of the available evidence.

Queen Isabella fled before the rising of Spanish Libsaler under Prim and Serrano. Attempts appear to have been first made, without success, to obtain Duke Thomas of Genoa, and Ferdinand of Coburg-Gothæ. We know that Bismarck had a secret agent, Bernhardi, in Spain, from the end of 1868, and that an offer was carried in April, and again in September, 1869, to Prince Leopold of Hohenzollern-Sigmaringen, by Salazar, formerly Secretary of Embassy at Berlin. The prince's father informed Napoleon III, who did not raise objections; but, in reply to questions, Bismarck told the French Ambassador, Benedetti, that the proposal could not be serious, otherwise King William would counsel its rejection. Prince Leopold was not, actually, an unsuitable candidate. A Catholic, aged thirty-four, personally vigorous, younger brother of the Prince of Roumania, son-in-law of the King of Portugal, related in a like distant degree both to the French Emperor and the Prussian King, there was nothing against him from the French point of view except that he was a cadet of the House of which King William was the head, and that his father, Prince Karl Anton, had been Premier of Prussia in 1859. What's in a name? Unhappily, if a sick Emperor in Paris is being pushed by a reckless Empress into a quarrel to fix their son's throne, and if a robustious Chancellor in Berlin is only too anxious to give them an opportunity, the name "Hohenzollern" will serve better than most for a pretext. In February, 1870, Salazar was in Berlin with a fresh offer. King William thought it should not be accepted; but Bismarck advised Prince Leopold "to abandon all scruples, and to accept the candidature, in the interests of Germany." It was to be "a red rag to the Gallic bull," or (a more truly Pomeranian metaphor) *eine spanische Fliege*, a

cantharidine blister for Parisian swelled-heads. The Prince still hesitating, Bismarck sent his trustiest agent, Lothar Bucher, to Madrid at Easter, to expedite the affair. Salazar journeyed once more to Sigmaringen; and, at this, the fourth time of asking, Prince Karl Anton and Prince Leopold gave their consent (June 14, 1870). The candidature was proclaimed in Madrid three weeks later; and the Cortes was summoned to meet for the election on July 20.

King William's obstinate hesitation had thrown Bismarck into one of his periodic indispositions, involving ~~retirement~~ to the Achillean tent at Varzin. Now, however, he was in ~~high~~ fettle, and very busy with his "reptiles." Dr. Moritz Busch, already experienced in official press work, had joined his staff at the end of February, immediately discovering that "the statesman whom I had the honour to serve thoroughly understood the business of journalism." It is a great "business" to "thoroughly understand"; yet the Chancellor could certainly teach the old journalist something. One of Busch's first tasks was to write an article for the "*Kolnische Zeitung*," to be dated from Paris. "Yes," comments the Chief, "you have correctly expressed my meaning. The composition is good. But no Frenchman thinks in such logical and well-ordered fashion; yet the letter is understood to be written by a Frenchman. It must contain more gossip, and you must pass more lightly from point to point. In doing so, you must adopt an altogether French standpoint. A Liberal Parisian writes the letter, and gives his opinion as to the position of his party towards the German question, expressing himself in the manner usual in statements of that kind." "Finally," adds the naïve "Buschlein," "Count Bismarck dictated

the greater part of the article." The second part of the argument began with the words: "Whoever has had an opportunity of observing here in Paris," etc.¹ We shall have more reasons presently for entertaining the suggestion that Otto von Bismarck must be counted among the founders of the New Journalism.

Busch was one of several chief assistants in this work, standing, apparently, outside the regular Press Bureau of the Foreign Office, and taking instructions daily from the Chancellor for articles which were communicated to the press, and also for shorter communications and conversations with editors. Bismarck often dictated a whole article. If Busch is to be trusted, the journalistic intrigues must have occupied a considerable portion of the Chancellor's time, and they continued till the end of his active life.

On March 7, Busch is instructed to secure the insertion of an article in the press commencing: "For some time past, vague rumours of war have been current throughout the world, for which no sufficient ground exists in fact or can be suggested." On the same day, "attention is to be directed, at first in a paper which has no connection with the Government, to the prolonged sojourn of Archduke Albrecht in Paris as a suspicious symptom. In connection with it, rumours have been circulated in London of an understanding between France and Austria. Our papers should afterwards reproduce these hints." Busch's next entry is as follows: "March 12.—Bücher gave me the chief's instructions to order the Spanish newspaper *Imparcial*. This is of some importance, as it doubtless

¹ This and following quotations are from the English edition of Busch's *Bismarck: Some Secret Pages of History*. Macmillan, 1898.

indicates that even then we had a hand in electing the new King." A little later, Prussian Liberals, who believe the English press is free, are informed as to the effect of the Irish Crimes Act. On April 12, Bismarck dictates a savage article on the corruption of French manners: "The idea that Paris is the home and school of good manners is now only to be met with in other countries, in old novels, and amongst elderly people in the most remote part of the provinces. It has long since been observed, and not alone in European Courts, that the present generation of Frenchmen do not know how to behave themselves . . . It is therefore quite conceivable that the Empress Eugénie, as a sensitive Spaniard, has been powerfully affected by the tone and character of Prussian society . . . We know that the Empress has repeatedly recommended young Germans as models for the youth of France."

During June, Bismarck, aided by Bucher, sends from Varzin to the Wilhelmstrasse sheafs of draft articles, paragraphs, and suggestions on the Spanish question. There is one kind of instruction for the "semi-official," and another for the "official press." The latter is to express "great surprise at the presumption of the French." As the crisis is reached, in July, historical allusions, insinuations, and incitements are to be added to heighten the flavour. The Empress Eugénie is denounced as "inciting her Consort and the Ministers," sacrificing everything for "the intrigues and aspirations of a corrupt dynasty." It is not a government, but "a den of brigands." When ambassadors hesitate to take official action, the press is used to bring things to a head. If any independence is shown, the Chancellor threatens "the withdrawal of all favours." "The direction of the

press to deal with Gramont's speech in very strong language is not to apply to the *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung*." Bismarck corrects and alters his instructions with every turn of the game; but the brutal note is steadily deepened. Thus, "the French as a nation resemble certain individuals among our lower classes; they are narrow-minded and brutal—great physical force, boastful and insolent, winning the admiration of men of their own stamp through their audacity and violence." It requires a good imagination to understand how Bismarck could at the same time be conducting regular diplomatic communications.

In attempting to state exactly the share of Bismarck's responsibility for what followed, we must not be supposed to ignore, because it is not our task to examine, the responsibility of the French Imperial family, the French Cabinet, Parliament, and people. At some point these responsibilities commingle. The French press played no angelic part while Bismarck's reptiles lashed French readers to anger. When the announcement of the candidature was made in Paris, on July 2, there was already too much combustible material at hand; and on the 6th the pile was lit, when the Duc de Gramont, the Foreign Minister, declared in the Chamber that France could not allow a Prussian prince to be placed on the throne of Charles the Fifth, to the prejudice of France and the European equilibrium. The body of the statement had been agreed to in a Council of Ministers at St. Cloud; but, according to one version of the story, the reference to the throne of Charles Quint was added afterwards, at the instance of the Empress Eugénie. "This," says Professor Wilhelm Oncken,¹ "was the work of the Empress under the in-

¹ *Deutsche Rundschau*, vol. II, No. 8.

fluence of her confessor." According to Marshal MacMahon, she looked to a foreign diversion to save the throne from the sacrifices to which the Ollivier Ministry was leading it. "She counted on success in a fortnight or three weeks. Then peace would be made; and the Emperor with recovered prestige, could withdraw the dangerous concessions he had made."¹ Thiers told Lord Granville² that "neither France, nor Paris, nor the Chamber was in favour of war; that the Empress pressed it, that the Emperor decided it, but in the vacillating manner peculiar to his character; that the generals promoted it in the hope of becoming marshals, and the marshals because they desired to be dukes and princes. The Bonapartists, more violent than the Imperial dynasty, pressed it because they thought that the Emperor's and consequently their own influence would be increased by a victorious campaign. . . . He described how nearly peace had been secured, and how M. Ollivier had been intimidated by the violence of the Bonapartists."

But we anticipate. War was not yet inevitable, though it was commonly thought to be. On the evening of July 8, the French Ambassador reached Ems, near Coblenz, under instructions to ask King William, who was taking the waters there, to secure Prince Leopold's withdrawal. While refusing to regard this as anything but a personal matter, the King did privately write to Sigmaringen. On the 10th, Prince Karl Anton, pressed, it is said by Bismarck, replied that it was too late to draw back. At the same time, Gramont wrote from Paris to his un-

¹ Reported by Senator Grivart after the publication of MacMahon's *Souvenirs*.

² On September 13, 1870, in London. Lord Fitzmaurice's *Life of Granville*, II, 52.

fortunate envoy: "I tell you plainly, public opinion is on fire, and will leave us behind it. We must begin; we wait only for your despatch to call up the 300,000 men who are waiting the summons. Write, telegraph, something definite." King William, to the Chancellor's despair, still temporized; and on the 12th Prince Leopold actually withdrew. The news was published in the *Kölnische Zeitung*; and on the following morning the King sent a copy of that journal to Benedetti. The pendulum seemed to have swung across to peace. Within the next twelve hours war was settled.

The Ambassador had received, simultaneously, orders from the infatuated Gramont to demand ~~and~~ ^{an} undertaking that the candidature would never be renewed. The old King, offended, refused, but added that he had no hidden designs, and had good reason to hope that the question was closed. Gramont had also induced the German Ambassador in Paris, Baron Werther, to send to Ems for approval a draft note stating that the King of Prussia had not meant any offence to the French nation. Again irritated, the King nevertheless sent an aide-de-camp to Benedetti to report that he had received from Sigmaringen the official withdrawal, and that he approved it. Benedetti having repeated his instructions, the King replied (it was in the middle of the afternoon of July 13) that he could not discuss the matter further. The aide-de-camp added that the Ambassador might come on the morrow to the station at Ems to salute His Majesty on his departure for Coblenz. It is the fact, as Benedetti afterwards himself testified, that at Ems "there was neither insulter nor insulted."

The scene changes to the Wilhelmstrasse in Berlin. Bismarck, returned from Varzin on the previous evening,

had spent the day in the office, enraged at the prospect of a humiliating peace. "Called early to the Chief," reports the obedient Busch. "I am to wait until a statement appears in the press to the effect that the renunciation of Prince Hohenzollern was in consequence of pressure from Ems, and then to contradict it." One dictated article (containing the reference to Paris as "a den of brigands") remarks that the Ems incident "has created so much indignation in Germany that many people feel disappointed at Prince Leopold's renunciation." In the evening, the Chancellor dines with Roon and Moltke to whom he discloses his intention to retire from public life. Bloom weighs upon the party. At 5.9 p.m., a messenger comes in with the news that a cypher despatch from Abeken, telegraphed from Ems at 3.50 p.m., has arrived. After an impatient wait for the decoding, Bismarck reads the message to his no less anxious colleagues, who are so excited that they forget all about their dinner. He reads it again, and a third time, now with relief as the final words authorising a communication to the embassies and the press take hold upon his mind. A question to Moltke as to the army, reassuringly answered; and he moves to an adjourning table and, with a large pencil, begins to sub-edit the royal words.

"I have left the head and the tail"; and, as they read, the two old soldiers cry "Magnificent! that will do it!" "If, as His Majesty commands," Bismarck adds, "I communicate it at once to the papers, and telegraph it to all our embassies, it will be known in Paris before midnight. Not only by what it says, but also by the way it will be circulated, it will have the effect of a red flag on the Gallic bull . . . Success depends above all on the impression that the origin of the war will provoke among

us and among them. It is essential that we should be the attacked."¹

Busch was not present to enjoy and report this historic scene ; but, months afterwards, during the siege of Paris, he heard his master refer thus to the most critical moment in his life : " I have not seen him (Moltke) looking so well for a long time past. That is the result of the war. It is his trade. I remember that, when the Spanish question became acute, he looked ten years younger ; afterwards, when I told him that the Hohenzollern had withdrawn, he suddenly looked quite old and infirm ; and when the French showed their teeth again ~~Moltke~~ was once more fresh and young. The matter finally ended in a *diner à trois*—Moltke, Roon, and I—which resulted (here the Chancellor smiled a cunning smile) in the Ems telegram."

Bismarck pretended afterwards that he had not modified or added to the message. To test this statement it will be sufficient to print, side by side, the original (as it was communicated to the Reichstag by Count Caprivi on November 24, 1892) and the edited version :

ABEKEN'S DESPATCH :

Ems, July 13, 3.40 p.m.
His Majesty the King writes to me :
" Benedetti approached me

BISMARCK'S VERSION :

After the news of the renunciation of the Hereditary Prince of Hohenzollern had been communicated to the Imperial

¹ In October, 1892, Bismarck said to Harden : " It is so easy for one who has some practice, without falsification, merely by omissions to change the sense. As the editor of the Ems despatch which the Social Democrats have been hawking about for twenty years, I should know. The King sent it to me with the order to publish it either completely, or in part. After I had summarized it by deletions, Moltke who was with me exclaimed : *Vorhin was eine chamade, jetzt ist eine fanfare.*" (*Zukunft*, Oct. 29, 1892, p. 204, and Dec. 3, 1892, p. 435.)

on the promenade to ask me finally, in a very pressing way, to authorise him to telegraph that I would undertake for the future not again to give my approval if the Hohenzollerns renewed their candidature. I refused in a serious enough tone at the end of our conversation, for one must not and cannot take such engagements for ever.

"I told him very naturally that I had not received anything more, and that he could easily understand, as he was informed before me of news from Paris and Madrid, that my Government was not concerned in the matter."

His Majesty received immediately afterwards a letter from the Prince. As His Majesty had told Benedetti that he expected news from the Prince, he decided, on the suggestion of Prince Eulenburg and myself, and in consideration of the opinions expressed above, not again to receive Benedetti, but to inform him by his aide-de-camp that His Majesty had received from Prince Bismarck the confirmation of the news that Benedetti had already received from Paris, and that His Majesty had nothing further to say to the Ambassador.

His Majesty leaves it to Your Excellence to decide whether the new demand of Benedetti and the refusal with which he met it should be communicated to our Ministers abroad and to the Press.

French Government by the Royal Spanish Government, the French Ambassador afresh required at Ems of H.M. the King authorisation to telegraph to Paris that H.M. the King undertook for the future not again to give his consent if the Hohenzollerns should renew their candidature.

H.M. the King thereupon

refused to receive the French Ambassador again and informed him by his aide-de-camp that H.M. had nothing further to communicate to the Ambassador.

Well might the old war-horses, Moltke and Roon, neigh with joy. Abeken had done well for the greater of his masters—especially, in failing to mention that the King and the Ambassador were actually to meet for a friendly greeting next morning. Bismarck had further truncated an inadequate report into a curt and menacing dismissal. It has been pointed out¹ that, even when he had no longer a purpose to serve, the Chancellor could not be content to state the exact truth about the Ems despatch, but in his *Gedanken und Erinnerungen* misquoted three phrases—printing “stopped me” for “approached me,” “very indiscreet” for “very pressing,” and “severe enough tone” for “serious enough tone.”

Thus the loaded die was cast.² By midnight, as he had provided, the news was in Paris. In the morning it was printed in the official *North German Gazette* and the chief newspapers of Europe. Summoned to Berlin by Bismarck, the King could not understand the wild joy of the street mob, but readily accepted signs of “loyalty” such as had not come his way for three years past. Paris was aflame with anger, already crying “à Berlin!” The sick Emperor would still have sought peace, but dare not resist the flood of war-madness. Benedetti was back home on the morning of the 15th, and might have explained that there had been no “insult,” and that, with Prussian approval, the candidature was withdrawn.

¹ Welschinger's *Bismarck*, p. 110.

² Seignobos, in his great *Histoire Politique de l'Europe Contemporaine*, holds that there was no “falsification,” which suggests that he had not closely compared the texts. He adds, with regard to the rumour of some other “insult” to France: “An oral tradition in the French diplomatic world attributes to King William a phrase such as could not be printed.” I know of no other evidence in support of this suggestion.

He does not seem to have done so. Later in the day, the calling out of the Garde Mobile and credits for mobilization were voted in the Chamber, against the protest of Thiers, Gambetta, and eight other members of the Extreme Left. King William immediately ordered the mobilization of the Prussian army. The official declaration of war was delivered in Berlin on the 19th. It was addressed only to Prussia ; but on that day the Reichstag of the North German Confederation granted war credits, with no dissentient voices except those of the two Social Democratic deputies, and military preparations began in Bavaria and Württemberg.

V. THE SPIRIT OF SEDAN

Up came the cohorts from north and south and east, Prussians, Saxons, Bavarians, Württembergers, Rhinelanders, men of Hamburg and Bremen, all at last united in what they deemed a pure crusade for national honour, and the right to set Germania, indissolubly one and undeniably strong, in the front rank of modern Powers. Fed on the lies of the Reptile Bureau, as the French were fed on the lies of clerical courtiers and greedy militarists, the simple-hearted Teutons imagined a new "War of Liberation" which should end, once for all, the ages of humiliation, discord, and futility that filled their school histories. Those seemed to be unquestionably right, now, who had foretold that, after Austria, France must be fought, that, after Olmütz, Jena must be avenged.

Yet they saw it as a war of defence and justification, not of conquest.

The worst that could be thought of it was that, since neither poetry nor philosophy, neither Christian Church nor Hohenzollern State could compass that unification of German life which remained, as it was said, like the uncompleted fabric of the great cathedral at Cologne, the last resort indicated by the men of Blood and Iron must be tried. "When the whole French nation, with arrogant cry vehemently demanded the frontier of the Rhine," writes one of these soldier-patriots, "all German lands shook with indignation so mighty, so fierce, that it swept away in an instant all the dissensions, ~~and heart-~~ burnings of south and north, of Catholic and Protestant, of Feudalist and Progressist, of Liberal and Democrat : all listening, responding, but to the one call 'the Fatherland in danger.' Conscious that its cause was the cause of justice and patriotism, all Germany to a man rose with an enthusiasm unparalleled in its intensity and universality ; and, with a determination, with a unanimity of purpose, such as Germans had not felt for centuries, a million warriors, ' the nation in arms,' pressed round the national banner raised by the venerable King of Prussia, and drew up, fearless and exultant, in majestic battle-array along that sacred river of theirs, drowning the French clamours in the mighty strains :

A shout bursts forth like thunder crash,
Like roar of waves, like sabre crash :
On, to the Rhine, the German Rhine !
Who'll guard the noble river's line ?
Dear Fatherland, no fear be thine ;
Firm stands the watch that guards the Rhine

"And we, all, who hastened to the defence of the threatened river felt as our hearts thrilled to the inspiring accents[†]

of the ' Watch on the Rhine,' that, in the vow ' We all will thy firm guardians be,' there lay the essence, the quickening power of German unity. We all felt that, if we only combined like a nation of brothers in one great sacrifice to atone for the discord of the past, if we showed strength enough to vindicate our right to our frontier, we should gain the universal recognition of our capacity and our inalterable determination to resume among the great nations of Europe the rank worthy of the traditions, the vitality, and the achievements of the Teutonic race."¹

But pure idealism is poor sustenance against those doubts and visitations of horror that come when the young recruit must face the wall of flame, or the ghosts of the day's dead haunt the gloomy bivouac. The war-spirit of our modern hosts demands some grosser inspiration. Not the hope of loot; not promotion, or even the Iron Cross, perhaps; but at least the sense of combating a foul and despicable enemy whom it is a virtue to crush. " The French show themselves to be a decadent nation," slaves in a " den of brigands," who " would sacrifice the peace and welfare of Europe to the intrigues of a corrupt dynasty "; Bismarck knew what he was doing when he set his newspaper hacks a-dancing to that tune. Fellow of this sense of moral superiority is the sense of new, perhaps irresistible, power. No good German could have imagined that dinner-party in the Wilhelmstrasse at which the Triumvirate had completed their grand *coup*. But every good German knew, from the years of his own labour and sacrifice, what the Chancellor meant when he told the Reichstag that " Germany's armour shows no flaw to the enemy." Eight years of Bismarckian rigour

¹ *The Growth of German Unity*, by Dr. Gustav Krause, now London Correspondent of the *Schlesische Zeitung*.

258 THE BISMARCKIAN TRANSFORMATION

had borne their fruit. No country in Europe (the case of Russia is incomparable, if only because military organization had there been balanced by emancipation of the serfs) had so concentrated its efforts upon the making of a huge army. In less dramatic shape and colder temper, a transformation had been wrought like that by which Carnot* and the Committee of Public Safety had made out of the revolutionary mob of 1794 the incredible instrument of Napoleon's triumphs. Men speak of German discipline and German idealism as if these were easily reconcilable quantities, twin ideas, and not jealous rivals. Freedom and variety are of the essence of idealism. Fine words ; fine fruit in England, perhaps ; a riot of weeds here. But now the indomitable will of a Pomeranian Squire had bent to one aim all those impulses and activities that in a free and mature society flow out toward a thousand objectives. Though the pundits blow all their silver trumpets, *The Critique of Pure Reason* will not become popular, and even *Faust* will need explanation to the labourer ; but, man, woman, and child, all can thrill to the story of Sadowa. A great victory wipes out a multitude of political sins. Prince Hohenlohe, after witnessing a review of the Berlin garrison in May, 1870, noted in his diary : " I mingled with the crowd, and was struck with the interest manifested by the lowest of the people in things military. No trace of the former animosity against the soldiery which used to be noticeable among the lower classes. The commonest working man looked on the troops with the feeling that he belonged or had belonged to them. Everywhere stories of Königgrätz, Düppel, etc., by old service-men who were among the spectators." Even in Bavaria, where " the lower classes, workmen, and so on, are not particularly

enthusiastic about the war, nor much inclined to shout 'Hoch!' to a Prussian prince," there was no hesitation to mobilize; and, so powerful was the pressure of prestige and discipline, the ferment of warlike pride, the fierce thirst for victory, that presently the Southerners were fighting with the best.

Despite the smooth working of the mobilization, there had been two or three weeks of grave fear in the West. "The very highest Prussian military authority states," Morier wrote a month later, "that, during this fortnight, 75,000 French troops were marched upon the frontier, and that there was absolutely nothing to prevent a force even inferior from over-running the German provinces on the left bank of the Rhine and a great portion of Southern Germany on the right bank. A mere *razzia* on a large scale, which would have had for its object to destroy railways and magazines, and which would have been effected with perfect impunity, would have rendered the concentration of the German army on the left bank impossible . . . The strategical conditions were instinctively felt to be altogether in favour of a French offensive . . . It was at this period that, for the first time I heard whispered the ominous words 'Alsace-Lorraine.'"

No such raid was attempted; and, thenceforward, every day seemed to vindicate the superiority of the Teutonic mind. In July, 1870, the French army—including the National Guard, 750,000 men, on paper—counted scarcely more than half a million men in fact; while Germany had 450,000 ready, and could call out 1,183,000. That the French would nearly always be outnumbered, and that inadequate railways would greatly delay them was anticipated; but that they would be so ill-equipped and so ill-organized that they would never get beyond

their own frontiers, but would welter there in hopeless confusion till, to the astonishment of the world, the possibility of offensive action had passed, here was comfort for the apostles of the Right of Might! To recall Ollivier's remark that the Ministry went to war "with a light heart," and Lebœuf's "we are absolutely ready to the last gaiter-button," and then to see the tatterdemalion "froggies" made prisoners while digging up potatoes for food—could there be any more conclusive evidence that France had become a decadent nation? As lurid tales leaked through into the German lines of the rottenness of the Imperial Court and Staff, the incompetence of the Emperor, rouging his cheeks to conceal the ravages of disease, the general unpreparedness; as one army after another was scattered by the iron front of the invaders; and as, later, the conquered people turned desperately under Gambetta, refusing to accept the inevitable, a deep change passed over the spirit of the victorious host.

The reduction of the Danes had been a holiday trip; the Bohemian campaign was a glorious trifle. Wörth and Spicheren, Vionville and Mars-la-Tour, Saint Privat and Gravelotte—by these bloody steps the tide of war rose to the frightful climax of Sedan (September 2), where, after losing 17,000 killed and wounded, Napoleon and his last free army of 100,000 men and 558 guns surrendered to a force immensely stronger in numbers, artillery, and position. The last hope of aid from Austria and Italy, or of British intervention, now disappeared.

The issue was decided. But on the one side there was no chivalry, on the other no common-sense. "Not an inch of our territory, not a stone of our fortresses," said Jules Favre on September 6. Bismarck would then have been content with Alsace. After the fall of Strassburg

on September 28, and Bazaine's surrender of Metz (October 27), with 170,000 men and 1,500 guns, the price of peace went up to Alsace and three milliards. Three months later, it cost another province and two more milliards.

The internment of the wretched Emperor at Wilhelms-höhe, near Cassel, the flight of the Empress to England, the proclamation of the Third Republic at the beginning of September, and the continued resistance, all helped to weaken any scruples remaining in the mind of the victors. The armies still sang hymns, from Luther's "Ein' feste Burg," to Geibel's "None fought for us but God alone, and so the peace we make shall be a German peace." But the pious good-nature of the old Teutonic character had given way to a hard and often exasperated spirit of determination to give this insanely patriotic enemy a lesson it would never forget. French irregulars were refused the barest rights of war, and villages harbouring them were burned down. France could forget these severities; there is one thing she has never forgotten. Gortchakoff gave warning that the contemplated absorption of territory, with 1,250,000 inhabitants "more Gallic than the Gauls," as Morier says, "because being Germans they can be more obstinately French than the French themselves," would leave a wound that would be for long a menace to the peace of Europe. Long afterwards (in the Reichstag in 1887), Bismarck claimed that he would have been content with "the language frontier," that he had not himself wished to take Metz, but Moltke said it was worth 100,000 men. In conversation at another time, he was reported as saying: "One does not mutilate with impunity. To take Metz and a part of Lorraine was the worst of political blunders." The words

do not ring true ; they certainly have no relation to the German temper after Sedan. This, it must be remembered, was no old-fashioned professional army, regarding fighting as a trade, or an adventure, but a body of citizens, shop-keepers, artisans, clerks, farmers, torn from their homes and businesses, which suffered, even if they themselves escaped whole, by every day of their absence.

We may judge from the deterioration of Bismarck's temper how the general morale had fallen. Accompanying the Staff for a large part of the campaign, though in no way directing it, he is constantly urging stronger measures. "Someone spoke of the last engagement," says Busch, "and said that a portion of the 1,200 prisoners that had been taken were franc-tireurs. 'Prisoners,' broke in the Chief, who still seemed to be extremely angry, 'why do they continue to make prisoners? They should have shot down the whole 1,200, one after the other.'" On November 6, "the Chief read to us at dinner a portion of his wife's letter, which was to the following effect: 'I fear you will not be able to find a Bible in France, and so I shall shortly send you the Psalms, in order that you may read the prophesies against the French—' I tell thee the godless shall be destroyed!'"

At the outset, the Chancellor had sought to buy Garibaldi into the German service. A report that he and 13,000 of his volunteers had been made prisoners led to an angry outburst: "That is really disheartening—to make prisoners of 13,000 franc-tireurs who are not even Frenchmen; why have they not been shot?" The delays in the bombardment of Paris were a matter of great annoyance to him. On November 19, Busch says: "It appeared, from some further remarks of the Minister, that, in his opinion, first Queen Victoria and then, at her

instance, the Crown Princess, and, finally, the Crown Prince, persuaded by his Consort, will not have Paris bombarded; while the generals 'cannot' bombard the city out of consideration for the views of the Crown Prince, who will, of course, be the future King, and will have the appointment of Ministers of War, commandants of army-corps, and field-m Marshals." On November 28, he is reported as saying: "The assertion of the generals that they have not enough ammunition is untrue. They do not want to begin because the Heir Apparent does not wish it. He does not wish it because his wife and his mother-in-law are against it." And he added that one of the consequences of this intervention would be "to lead to a restriction of personal rule." Busch is duly instructed to move the press to comment on this matter. On the following day, "the principal reason why the bombardment is delayed," said the Chancellor, "is the sentimentality of the Queen of England and the interference of Queen Augusta . . . That seems to be a characteristic of the Hohenzollerns—their women folk have always a great influence upon them."

On December 4, Bismarck is discussing the difficulties of the peace negotiations: "I should try a little coercion on the Parisians. I should say to them: 'I hold you two million people responsible in your own persons. I shall let you starve for twenty-four hours unless you agree to our demands.' Yes, and yet another four and twenty hours. Come what might of it, I would stick to my point, but for the King, the Crown Prince, the women who force their sentimental views upon them, and certain secret European connections—I can deal with those in front of me, but those who stand behind me, behind my back, or rather who weigh upon me so that I cannot breathe, people

for whom the German cause and German victories are not the main question, but rather their anxiety to be praised in English newspapers!" The Chancellor and his circle are greatly pleased with an article by Thomas Carlyle in the *Times* of November 18, which reads rather queerly to-day. "I believe," said Carlyle, "Bismarck will get his Alsace and what he wants of Lorraine; and likewise that it will do him and us and all the world, and even France itself by-and-by, a great deal of good . . . (Bismarck) in fact seems to me to be striving with patient, grand, and successful steps toward an object beneficial to Germans and to all other men. That noble, patient, deep and solid Germany should be at length welded into a nation, and become Queen of the Continent, instead of vapouring, vain-glorious, gesticulating, quarrelsome, restless, and over-sensitive France, seems to me the hopefulest public fact that has occurred in my time."

On December 27, the long-desired bombardment of Paris began. Bismarck was very impatient of the restrictions of international law, and wanted to withdraw from the Geneva Convention, "which," Busch drily observes, "is unpractical." His annoyance at the humanity of the military chiefs continues. A certain garrison which had capitulated ought to be drowned in the Seine. There was difficulty in collecting taxes: "The people should be simply told, 'If you do not produce the taxes in arrear within two hours, we shall pitch some shells in amongst you.' If they see that we are in earnest, they will pay. If not, the place should be bombarded, and that would help in other cases. They must learn what war means." Several English diplomatists are traduced, and certain English critics are dismissed as "swine."

“ They are full of vexation and envy because we have fought great battles here, and won them. They cannot bear to think that shabby little Prussia should prosper so. The Prussians are people who should merely exist in order to carry on war for them in their pay. This is the view taken by all the upper classes in England. They have never been well disposed toward us, and have always done their utmost to injure us.” “ The Crown Princess herself is the incarnation of this way of thinking ; she is full of her own great condescension in marrying into our country. I remember her once telling me that two or three merchant families in Liverpool had more silver plate than the entire Prussian nobility. ‘ Yes,’ I replied, ‘ that is possibly true, your Royal Highness, but we value ourselves for other things beside silver.’ ”

This tittle-tattle of the hero's valet has a use for the serious student of history that his first readers could hardly suspect. They were too much of the time, too near the man, to perceive what is our chief problem—the transformation of the Germany of Goethe into the Germany of to-day : in what does it consist, by what means has it been produced, and with what essential result does it leave us face to face ? Bismarck was the most considerable individual agent in this transformation. He had a jesuitical lack of scruple in the choice of means to attain his ends ; and we should never understand his character if we had only his public acts and utterances to judge by. Like all great men of action, he was not only an agent but a representative. The stream returns to its source. The hero gathers up certain vague potences in a people, and gives them back realized, ripened, hardened to accomplish some leading need of the time. He seems to be performing miracles, when he is making the implicit

explicit. He seems to be a master among slaves, when he has become the slave of the meaner ideas he shares with his fellows. A ten-fold energy is what chiefly distinguishes him. If he succeeds, it is by reason of what is common between him and them, rather than what is his alone. He is the *n*th power of the ordinary. In privacy, when the mask is off, especially in moments of excitement and anxiety, he will exhibit the tortured soul of the common folk who hang upon his public word. Why not shoot the franc-tireurs out of hand? Why not bombard this city of obstinate degenerates, or let them starve? These must have been commonplaces among the German citizen soldiers; they only seem cold-blooded in Bismarck's mouth because we have been used to think of him as one of those "noble, patient, deep, and solid" Germans of Carlyle's hero-making imagination, and because we persistently forget the demoralizing effect of warfare, which is most deep among those for whom it has not become a mere profession.

No human being could be, through and through, so cold and hard as Bismarck liked to appear, as none could really be so fierce as the present Kaiser looks when he is posing for his portrait. But brutality and pride grow by exercise. To a man whose function was to kill the surplus of sentimentalism in the German nature, every opponent seemed a sentimentalist. Woman holds no very high place in the average German mind; in his attacks upon the ladies of the Court, however, Bismarck showed at least this superiority over the British guardsman, that he had nothing of the snob in his composition. In German politics, except among the Socialists, woman counts for nothing; and evidently woman must always be a nuisance on the battlefield. The Crown Princess,

with her English capacity for public life, her English instincts which are the fine distillation of principles in action, her love of fair play and hatred of brutality, must inevitably seem to him the most troublesome of sentimentalists; and we shall see that he pursued her to the end with a particular enmity. Apropos of an earlier instance, Morier had shrewdly observed that this tendency to bitter personalities rose from the very concrete and realistic qualities that were Bismarck's strength. "The political arena is to him in a very literal sense a prize-ring, in which the bigger man knocks down the lesser man and pockets the stakes. The natural result of ignoring principles as the levers to political action is to supply the deficient motive power by personal intrigue, and hence personal intrigue," or the fear of it, "has played a part in Bismarck's political career which to a person versed only in nineteenth century British politics would appear incredible."

"*Macht geht vor Recht.*" Could anyone doubt it? Had not three wars given a crescendo of proof of the validity of all the Bismarckian precepts? In the mind of every German of the day for whom Bismarck was the appointed man, his methods the necessary methods, his achievements all-glorious—and these had now become the majority—the same poison was working. The hardships of the lonely frontiersman, the sailor's starry vigil, the risks that make an adventure of life for hundreds of thousands of humble labourers, cleanse the heart and keep courage hand in hand with gentleness. The battlefield only hardens. It leaves no time for pity, or strength for thought. Set a million men for ten months to the work of manslaughter, and you may look forward to a generation in which the idealism of force has killed all nobler

idealisms. It will be the worse if they come of a people long humbled, divided, impoverished, regimented. It will be the worse if they are steadily victorious, and that mainly by reason of superior numbers. And it will be again the worse when the outnumbered enemy, betrayed rather than evenly beaten, fights obstinately to the last ditch. The great host had gone out to defend the Fatherland—that was the spirit of all their hymns and songs. Quickly this glory had fallen to the weaker enemy, and theirs had become a task of mutilation. It is a vulgar rôle, that of conqueror. If any do not feel it in their conscience, the world's cold scorn will bring it home. But that comes too late. If the victors are not glorified, they must glorify themselves, must "sing to keep their courage up." So, when the Bismarckian transformation was complete, the German nation, now fully imperialised, set itself resolutely to the task of proving, by building of innumerable monuments, and oft repetition in speech and song and school teaching, that its great soldiers were incomparable beings, and, by buckling on their new armour in permanence, that "*Macht geht vor Recht*" was for them a sincere conviction.

All the efforts to relieve Paris or to effect a successful sortie having failed, the starving city capitulated on January 24, 1871. A month later peace negotiations began at Versailles; continued in Brussels, they were completed in Frankfurt on May 10. France ceded the whole of Alsace except Belfort, and about a fifth part of Lorraine, including Metz; agreed to pay within three years an indemnity of five milliards of francs (£200 millions), and to give German goods "most favoured nation" terms. French writers have estimated the cost of the war to France, including the indemnity, loans, succour

for victims, repair of damage done, and other indirect charges, at £400 millions, or about £1,600,000 a day. The cost of the campaign to Germany, with contingent charges and the army reorganization, has been estimated at £135 millions. The graver debit to France included 120,000 combatants killed, and 150,000 wounded; the number of prisoners at one time exceeded half a million. German reports give the losses of the victors as only 28,600 killed in battle, 12,000 by disease, 4,000 missing, and 101,000 wounded.

The signatures to the Treaty of Frankfurt summarised a vast change. The Empire that had declared war was no more; and the Republic made peace not with the King of Prussia, or the sovereign-president of the North German Confederation—that also had passed away—but with King William as first German Emperor.* King Ludwig II of Bavaria and King Charles of Württemberg had entered the federation with the greatest reluctance, and only under guarantee of certain privileges. These included a degree of military autonomy, separate management of railways and posts, and the presidency for Bavaria of a Foreign Affairs Committee of the Bundesrath representing the three Southern States. Before the end of November, the necessary treaties had been concluded, and the Confederation became the German Empire. By January, 1871, all the parliaments had approved the change, the Bavarian by only a small majority.

The so-called "Constitution of the German Empire" is, properly, not a constitution, but a set of by-laws under fourteen heads—territory, legislation, Bundesrath, Presidency, Reichstag, customs and trade, railways, posts and telegraphs, navy, consulates, war,

finance, regulation of disputes and penalties, and general provisions. It declares that the twenty-six States "form an eternal union for the protection of the realm and the care of the welfare of the German peoples." There is no declaration of personal rights; and what we have called State "guarantees" could at any time be abrogated, or any other revolution effected, by a two-thirds majority of the Federal Council. Some day this looseness (as compared with the American Constitution, for instance) may prove a popular advantage. As in the United States, the Executive is not vitally connected with the Legislature, and Ministers are responsible not to the latter but to the President of the federation who, however, is here not elected by the people, but is an hereditary monarch of one of the States. The Prussian sovereign wields almost as much power in the Empire as in his own monarchy. This aim was supreme with Bismarck, whose mind was never for a moment fogged with the constitution-mongering precedents of 1848. That the dream of an All-German realm was not realized (since the Germans of Austria were shut out, while Poles, Danes, and Frenchmen were included) mattered no more to him than that the war had falsified the high ideal of "The Watch on the Rhine." The soldiers' arguments alone counted. Thus, Alsace-Lorraine was necessary to the defence of the Empire; and the Empire was necessary to the defence of Alsace-Lorraine. So the two provinces became a "Reichsland," or Imperial territory, at first without autonomy or representation in the Bundesrath, directly governed by the Chancellor. Prussia—with seventeen out of fifty-eight members of the Federal Council, and 236 out of 397 Reichstag deputies, with her almost absolute military and diplomatic power—stood

supreme amid her satellites ; and for nearly twenty years to come Bismarck was to be the real ruler of Prussia—the uncrowned King and Emperor.

King William had no liking for the imperial title, and, like his brother in 1849, would never have accepted it from a body of popular representatives. Bismarck, aided by the Crown Prince, induced the other sovereigns to press it upon him ; and the solemn proclamation took place, amid a display of military pomp in the Hall of Mirrors of the Palace of Versailles, on January 18, 1871. Amid the applause of a reconciled nation, the Imperial Chancellor was made *Prince* Bismarck.

CHAPTER VII

THE NEMESIS OF FORCE

I. CONQUERED BORDERLANDS

IN the bosom of an unworthy triumph the seeds of failure thrive. The world was dazzled at the time, and it is still a little dazzled, by Bismarck's achievements. In only eight years of office he had waged three successful wars, consolidated and greatly extended the Prussian Kingdom, re-inspired the bureaucracy and the military caste, and established the Empire with himself as managing director. Of modest origin, friendless, unaccommodating, two things greatly favoured him: the political weakness and docility of the German people, and the growth of material wealth under the Zollverein, which generally went to his credit though he was nowise its creator. Mastery is the use of chance; and Bismarck's gifts, like humbler men's, swelled with the joy of using them. Authority was the breath of his nostrils; he revelled in the hatred of his victims and the adulation of his friends. Yet here was his greatness: exhilarated, even intoxicated, by combat and the prestige of repeated victory, he developed no Napoleonic madness, but contented himself, for the most part, in the last fifteen years of his career, with efforts to secure the ground gained.

If he failed—and he did fail, on the grand scale of his success—it was not by petty recklessness, but by the

working-out of the inherent vices of his policy. His conquered provinces remain to this day thorns in the flank of the Empire ; never did war bring costlier prizes. He went out to humble the Roman Church, and within eight years had to acknowledge a humiliating defeat at the hands of that shadowy power. By maiming the liberal spirit which is the strength of progressive States, he stimulated the growth of a revolutionary Socialism ; and, when he turned his instruments of repression against this extremer foe, he only hardened the resistance of what has become the largest and strongest of German parties. He invented the protective tariff to meet the State's share of the cost of his other creation, the militarist system. Which represents the greater oppression it would be hard to say ; the one keeps half the young men of the land in barracks for two years ; the other keeps woman and child on short commons, and every workman in the mine, field, factory, or workshop for, perhaps, an hour a day longer than need be. The sign-posts on this path all point to revolution. What shall it benefit a nation if it gain the whole world and lose its soul ? Germany has lost her old culture, her old idealism, her old good-nature, and has found, so far, nothing to put in their place but a Marxian doctrine. On the twenty-fifth anniversary of Sedan, one of Bismarck's most faithful disciples was constrained to confess that " the strengthening of the national feeling which the glad noise of this summer was to have brought us has so far been lacking. Indifferent, or in dull anger, the multitude holds aloof ; it does not wax enthusiastic over a growth to which it only serves as manure. The working-man who is light-heartedly promised the millennium flatly denies that he owes anything to the German Empire and to the great war " ; and even " the property-

owning middle-class . . . feel that they cannot subsist comfortably on nothing but great memories." ¹

The mythical sisters still weave their fateful threads. The evils for which Bismarck was chiefly responsible fully revealed themselves only after his death ; but he who had exhausted all the possibilities of public honour, as of public influence, could not at the end escape dishonour and neglect. He had grimly watched the tragic death-bed on which the liberal hopes of the Emperor and Empress Frederick had foundered. Within two years, the new master who had been his ardent pupil turned upon him, dismissed him, as one might dismiss a coachman, and took the reins into his own hands. In the mirror of misfortune some men first truly see their own features. It was in such a chastened mood that Bismarck one day said to Busch : " There is no doubt that I have caused unhappiness to great numbers. But for me three great wars would not have taken place ; 80,000 men would not have been killed, and would not now be mourned by parents, brothers, sisters, widows, and sweethearts. I have settled that with God," he added, characteristically ; " but I have had little, if any, pleasure from all I have done, while I have had a great deal of worry, anxiety, and trouble."

Ideas, also, are living beings, and have their evolution from youth to age. They lie, a fond germ, in the mind of some impossible pioneer, spread, a powerful impulse among the mass of folk, and at length, their work done, fade into the neglect of some bookish cemetery. The idea of national unity had gained a vague and various, but most real meaning, for the commonalty of the German lands. It meant, above all, the levelling of ancient

¹ Maximilian Harden : *Koepfe*.

barriers, wider opportunity, real tasks for growing brains too long cramped amid the relics of feudalism, a freer flow of life from the Alps to the Northern Mediterranean—in a word, more liberty. Born in the study, it was accepted because it answered to a thousand social needs. And because of the strength of the hunger it promised to feed, not by any genius in its academic apostles, it fulfilled itself in no inconsiderable degree. The Zollverein, its earliest and in some ways its completest expression, gave an immense stimulus to industry and trade, which in turn reacted upon the faculties of invention and industrial energy in the people, and upon the methods of public education. English machinery was brought over and imitated ; English and Scottish foremen organized textile and other factories ; English inventions—the processes for the use of phosphoric iron and the making of aniline dyes are the classic instances—were seized upon and made the basis of vast industries. Railways were woven across the land as by fairy fingers. The old habit of universal schooling now appeared as a high business virtue. Wealth increased ; and, before Bismarck's prime, Germany was already preparing to take the great position in the economic life of the world which she occupies to-day—nay, a position incomparably greater because it would have been based upon the strength of a free, self-directing, self-possessed, and therefore a truly united people.

For him, national unity was a means to a very different end. We have seen that his absolutist leanings, rather than mere impatience, led him to reject the possibility of accomplishing a political unification by pacific and democratic means, and that he deliberately chose the way of war. So, again, after his third, victorious campaign, he rejected the possibility of a moral unification of the Em-

pire, which would have involved a sincere liberalizing of its policy and structure, choosing rather to maintain Prussian bureaucratic and military ascendancy. His simple-minded followers thought him the maker of German unity, when, in fact, he was its evil genius, its betrayer. The brutal directness of his nature deceived all but a few, and those mostly distant, observers. It seemed, beside the "divine right" fooleries of the Hohenzollern Court, the blockheadedness of the bureaucratic governments, and the sentimental softness of most would-be reformers, almost a virtue. Nor is it the acts of persecution and oppression of which he was guilty that will carry in history the blackest mark, but that he gave all his prodigious energy and astuteness to the work of poisoning public opinion and debasing public life—essentially a work^o of disunion. Both weapons, violence and corruption, he used relentlessly in the spirit of the ancient maxim *Divide et Impera*. He radically perverted the patriotism of his people. He found his country politically anarchic, but morally united; he left it with a semblance of political union and a plague of moral anarchy that has become increasingly apparent since the veil of his personality was removed from the facts.

His strategy would have failed at once but for the morbid condition of mingled pride and fear which marked the early years of the Empire. Himself scorning principle, faith, generosity between man and man, party and party, nation and nation, he taught the German people to distrust all moral motives. It is the only way in which a policy of force can be maintained. So, fear reigned under a mask of pride. The conquered provinces festered, an arc of discontent from Posen in the east, through Hanover and Schleswig-Holstein, to Alsace-Lorraine in the

west. The reconciliation which England had effected in Quebec, and was to effect by the same simple magic in South Africa, is inconceivable to the rigid mind of official Prussia. Bismarck seemed to admit the truth when he spoke of the folly of "mutilating" France, and when (in the Reichstag, on May 26, 1871) he advocated autonomy for the Reichsland on the ground that, "the more the Alsacians feel themselves to be Alsacians, the more they will detach themselves from France." It is not the only case in which the Chancellor spoke well and acted ill. Desperate efforts were made to germanize the Vosges provinces—by means of school teaching, the influence of army service, a stimulated immigration of Germans, and, when these failed, by the dismissal of Francophile officials, banishment of the French language from schools and public offices, passport rigours, expulsions, press prosecutions, and an all-embracing police activity. All this served only to aggravate the local problem; while it created in the French mind such a flood of hatred as the worst of Napoleon's acts never earned in Prussia. The astonishing recovery of France was, perhaps, helped, was certainly coloured, by the feeling concentrated in that terrible formula *la Revanche*. Forty years have passed, time enough for sane men to grow out of the vicious circle of argument by which, on the one hand, a crime of 1648 is cited to justify a crime of 1871, and this, on the other side, to justify some new outrage upon the common peace. But generosity, if at all, comes quickly; and generosity has never come to Alsace-Lorraine.

Till 1874, its Government was a pure dictatorship by German officials named by the Chancellor. Then fifteen deputies were elected to the Reichstag—to demand a plebiscite, and to retire. A moderate Autonomist party

was formed to make the best of the situation ; and the Government established a Landesausschuss, or Consultative Commission of thirty delegates. In 1877 this body received certain legislative powers ; five deputies were sent to the Reichstag ; the administration was transferred from Berlin to Strassburg, under a Governor (Statthalter). Two years later, an Upper House of officials and notables was formed, and a representative of Alsace-Lorraine, with consultative position only, was appointed to the Bundesrath. As soon as the Autonomists were found to rest upon a tacit acceptance of German rule, however, they lost all popular support. A long period of strife followed. Frenchmen were expelled, French newspapers confiscated, societies suspected of French sympathies suppressed. Prince Hohenlohe, who was Stattholder from 1885 to 1894, favoured a more moderate régime. " Since last spring," he says in his diary, on May 8, 1888, " we have introduced a number of more or less vexatious measures which have aroused much ill-feeling. Prince Bismarck thereupon desired me to introduce the system of compulsory passports against France. . . . It seems that Berlin desires to introduce these irritating measures with the object of reducing the inhabitants of Alsace-Lorraine to despair, and driving them to revolt. I am, therefore, resolved to refuse Bismarck's proposal even at the risk of falling out with Bismarck and Bismarck junior. If I yield now, I cannot avert the final catastrophe of a military Government."¹ Nevertheless, he did yield, so strong is the bureaucratic tradition. " Bismarck," he says, " thinks before everything of planting his son firmly in the saddle. To this end he constantly works and schemes. There is, therefore, no hope that our conditions

¹ *Memoirs*, II, 384.

in Alsace-Lorraine will become better." In fact, the end of this acute phase may be dated to the abolition of the passport system in 1891, after the Chancellor's fall.

The "dictatorship clause" was removed in 1902; but it was not till May, 1911, that a Constitution was granted. There is general, direct, and secret voting for the Lower House of the Diet, with multiple votes over the age of thirty-five; the Upper House, also, has to the extent of a half (the rest being nominated) a representative character, delegates being sent to it by the religious communities, chief cities, chambers of commerce, and agricultural councils. This show of constitutionalism could be safely made, since the Diet has no control over the Executive; the Reichstag, which has no power in the internal legislation of the federated States, can here at any time intervene by a modification of the Constitution. The reality of Government, in fact, remains in Berlin.

Nor is that all. The jealousy, or fear, of the French spirit remains, although, of two millions of people, only a quarter of a million are now returned as French-speaking, and Paris no longer resounds with the boisterous anger of the *Ligue des Patriotes*. A late incident will serve to illustrate both this narrow temper and the new forms which the familiar issue tends to take. Visiting Strassburg, on May 12, 1912, the Emperor told the Burgomaster over luncheon that, if matters went on as they had been going recently in Alsace, he might suppress the Constitution, and incorporate the Reichsland in Prussia. The personal character of this warning aroused general public condemnation; but its cause, as admitted by the Chancellor in the Reichstag a week later, is much more significant. The Prussian and Imperial railway administration had recently refused to give further orders for loco-

motives to an Alsacian firm, the Grafenstaden Maschinenfabrik, until it dismissed the managing director of the company, whom they alleged to be, in Herr von Bethmann Hollweg's words, "the life and soul of all anti-German movements" in the region. The livelihood of two thousand workmen and contracts to the amount of four or five million marks were at stake. On learning of this intimation, the Diet of the Reichsland had passed a censorial resolution; this was the unruly conduct which caused the Kaiser's threat. It was alleged that the move against the Grafenstaden works was provoked by rival manufacturers in Westphalia; but this the Chancellor denied. He distinctly held, however, that "it was impossible for the German Empire to spend millions of marks on a firm which demonstrated its contempt for Germany," that it "was Prussia's duty to promote her industrial interests in the Reichsland," that "if the workmen suffered it was the fault of the employers, not the State," that unpatriotic machinations must be crushed, and if necessary the Constitution would be revised.

It is not, however, in this sphere, under the eyes of western Europe and the cooling scorn of Paris, that the worst wrongs have been done. The three millions of Poles of the eastern provinces have no fatherland to which to cry. Their fellows in Russia and Austria are in no better case. Poland is only a memory of blundering and martyrdom. To conquer, dominate, and exploit this Slavic frontier is the time-honoured mission of Prussia. Frederick the Great built nine hundred villages, and introduced three hundred thousand settlers, without extinguishing the native element. For these are not Redskins, to be destroyed by the smell of civilization. During the past century, periods of stern germanizing activity have

alternated with spasmodic attempts at conciliation. The revolts of 1848 and 1863 removed the last hopes of foreign aid ; yet, if the dream of a Polish State has passed, the national feeling continues to live upon a community of religious, cultural, and economic life. Bismarck never hesitated, never feared the effects of " mutilation " here. A liberal policy in East Prussia, Posen, and Silesia would have seemed to him the worst of sentimentality. Coercion of these Catholic aliens was a necessary part of his campaign against the Roman Church—the *Kulturkampf*, as Virchow named it, seeing in the Prussian Minister the champion not merely of Protestantism, but of civilization.

So, in 1872, the duty of school inspection was transferred from the clergy to State officials ; in 1873 the exclusive use of German in schools, except in religious teaching, was prescribed. At the same time, colonization was carried on actively, so that by 1886 a net transfer of 486,000 acres of land from Polish to German holders had been registered. In 1885-6, the great Bismarckian campaign opened with the expulsion of many settlers who had come in from Russian and Austrian Poland, and the expenditure of £5,000,000 in buying estates from Polish owners and settling Germans upon them. The law of April 26, 1886, established a bureaucratic Colonization Commission, with a purse of a hundred million marks, to stop what the King's Speech called " the crowding out of the German element " in the east. The plan was to buy, cut up, and drain suitable land, especially the larger estates of Polish landlords, and construct roads, schools, churches, hospitals, and town halls, as well as houses for the immigrants, and so to set up a purely German class of peasant proprietors. The expenditure of the Commission has

since grown to a total of £25,000,000, its staff to some six hundred officials ; it has built twelve thousand cottages and settled one hundred thousand persons on the Eastern Marches. Up to 1906, 814,000 acres of land were bought, chiefly in Posen, consisting almost wholly of large Polish properties, and were divided into 242 colonies, of thirteen thousand lots, maintaining as many families. The immense majority are Protestants, so that the opposition of race is strengthened by an opposition of religion. They pay a rent equal to three per cent. of the purchase money ; and in case of sales the Commission has the right of pre-emption. A vast movement such as this could not but have some good results. Arable cultivation has largely extended, and cattle raising has increased, the family pig supplanting the manorial sheep. Railway traffic and the yield of taxes have doubled. Machine industry, between the Russian tariff-wall and western competition, has benefited less ; but Posen, Dantzic, Bromberg, Marienwerder, and other towns have become busy commercial and banking centres. Fortified by the tariff on food imports, this agricultural region has prospered—at the cost of the remainder of the kingdom and the Empire. Except during four years of conciliation, under Count Caprivi (1890-4), no effort has been spared to make the campaign a success. Notwithstanding every form of pressure, however, from the loud Gothic appeal of the new royal castle at Posen to the soft admonition of the village pastor and the threats of the bureaucratic money-lender, the political end has not been attained.

The Poles, also, have become realists ; they have learned the lesson of organization. For a generation they have been busy creating a rampart of social institutions against the invader—educational societies, libraries, a

propagandist press, electoral committees, above all, banks, credit societies, and unions of peasants to prevent Polish lands from passing to Prussian ownership. In 1873 there were eleven, there are now three hundred, peasant unions. In the towns Polish workmen are urged to boycott German goods, to sell land only to their fellows, and to support the "national" bodies, Thousands of them emigrate, as do the less fortunate of the agricultural class between harvests (" *Sachsengänger* " these are called), to seek work in the industrial districts of Saxony and the Rhineland; Upper Silesia has become Polonized in this way. These men, while away, live their own lives, maintain their own unions, gymnastic and singing clubs, and, when they return, commonly use their savings to buy land holdings. It is thought that 50,000 *Sachsengänger* alone bring back three-quarters of a million sterling every summer. The middle-class effort of self-defence by the improvement of education and mutual aid is hardly less marked. The central citadel of the whole is a banking and credit system with a very large capital, the chief purpose of which is to defend and increase Polish ownership of the soil. One result of the conflict is that the price of land has more than doubled in twenty years; and, as few large Polish estates remain to be bought, this puts an irresistible temptation before the German colonists. The Colonization Commission has to buy farms offered it for fear of Polish purchasers getting them. Often the Polish purchaser and the German seller are in league. Professor Delbrück cites the case of two neighbours who failed; the Commission bought the land of the Pole, who a little later bought the land of the German. Of 838,000 acres bought by the Commission to the end of 1907, only one-third came from Polish hands; and it is believed that 250,000 acres

have been bought by Poles in ten years. The two results nearly cancel out.

The difficulty lies here : it is a poor soil ; the Pole is more used to poverty than the German ; under pressure of a bad crop or a fall in prices, thousands of Germans move west. The National Liberal capitalist of Westphalia, however, wants to keep the cheaper Polish labour in his mines and factories : that is what interests him in the East Prussian land system. So he votes for the colonization scheme to bring him humble alien workmen, and for food taxes to enable the displaced German to take to wheat-farming—at a safe distance. In 1898 the Prussian Landtag voted another five millions sterling, and in 1902 a further seven and a-half millions, for land purchase. In August, 1904, it passed a law making it almost impossible for Poles to erect farm buildings within the regions of German colonization. Since no material progress was still being made, the East Prussian Union (*Ostmarkenverein*)—a body of 45,000 members, largely officials, similar and allied to the Pan-German League—began to agitate for expropriation pure and simple. "The Watch on the Warthe and Vistula is more important than the Watch on the Rhine." such was their war-cry. When landlords and sober conservative statesmen protested against this extreme step as an ultra-Socialist breach of the rights of property, Prince Bülow (in the Prussian House of Lords, January 30, 1908) said it was simply a question whether the Eastern March was to remain German, or to become Polish. Representatives of the alien race, some of them nobles, replied that none thought of separation from Prussia, that it was no more a crime for Poles to buy land than for Germans to sell it, that persecuted men naturally defended themselves, that nothing would destroy Polish

sentiment except freedom or the expropriation of three million men, a plain impossibility. German speakers objected to the measure as unconstitutional. Ministers did not, perhaps, reply in the words of Frederick William IV, that they would never allow a sheet of paper to stand between God on high and their majesty ; but they acted in this sense. The power of expropriation being limited to 70,000 hectares of land and an expenditure of £6,500,000, the Bill was voted in the Lower House, by 198 (Conservatives and National Liberals) against 119 (Centre and Freisinnige), and in the Upper House by 143 to 111. In the minority were aristocrats and landlords, including Duke Ernest Gunther of Schleswig-Holstein, brother-in-law of the Emperor, a great soldier, Marshal Count von Haeseler (who said he would not fight against an unarmed opponent), and several Eastern burgomasters. A Pyrrhic victory !

II. THE UNCONQUERED CHURCH

England has known sadly, in her Irish question, the fateful influence of a unit of repressed national dissent. Prussia, with her four Irelands, can only by a stretch of imagination be glorified for her historic effort of national unification. These, however, are but marginal illustrations of the disabilities of arbitrary rule, interesting above all because they illustrate the alliance of old-fashioned race prejudice with the very modern rapacity of industrial magnates, and the fact that the Prussian State of to-day rests on force, not on any conservatism of principle. Alsace-Lorraine, Schleswig-Holstein, Hanover, and Prussian-

Poland, though they include a fifth of the population of the Empire, have been easily held as conquered lands. In the first Imperial Reichstag they numbered nineteen separatist deputies, in the last (1912) thirty-three—a tiresome but not seriously embarrassing minority, and actually convenient when an astute Minister wished to dangle the bogey of “a traitor within the gates” before a hesitant assembly. It is quite otherwise when we consider the irreconcilable elements in the body of the Empire. The struggle with two of these—the Catholic “Centre” and the Social Democrats—occupied the greater part of Bismarck’s later career. In the former case, that in which he had most justification, he was quickly and completely beaten. In the latter, he seemed to attain a certain measure of success by his regular prescription of alternate coercion and bribery; in fact, he left to his successors their gravest contemporary problem, in a determined Socialist party of 110 votes. In considering these two quantities, we shall be considering at least an important side of the life of two-thirds of the German people.

There is no clerical party in any Anglo-Saxon community; and it is not easy to explain to the Anglo-Saxon reader exactly what the German Centrum stands for. The strength of German Catholicism is commonly traced to the cunning of ultramontane leaders and the ignorance of certain parts of the population—the agricultural south and east, the industrial west, both largely alien—a very inadequate explanation. There are now about twenty-two million Roman Catholics in a population of sixty-five millions. It has been shown¹ that the number has in-

¹ The statistics are reviewed in chapter IX of *The Decay of the Church of Rome*, by J. McCabe, who estimates the relative loss at three millions.

creased during the past century almost proportionately with that of other confessions and the population at large, and that here, in the home of the Reformation, the old Church holds its own better than in any other part of the western world. Whatever discounts be made, this is too considerable a phenomenon to be passed over curtly. What is its meaning?

In the first place, it is rooted in those peculiar circumstances of German history which we have been at some pains to summarize. For two centuries after Luther, both branches of the Christian communion were maimed by warfare and social disruption. Each had its great soldiers, its princely patrons; both were degraded; there was a balance of power and a balance of loss. But in such a case the side more dependent on intellectual and moral progress necessarily suffers more. In the States which it held, the Roman Church was the same here and there; it retained great wealth, and continued to present much of its ancient grandeur and authority. All the easy object-lessons spoke for it. What had an age of strife accomplished? The priests had merely to point backward. Lutheranism, territorially broken, distantly challenged by Calvinism, and more nearly hit by Kantian and post-Kantian philosophy, never had the leisure and peace to evolve a great positive faith or a sufficing organic life of its own. It remained, in the main, a protest, a criticism, a revised version, stamped with the rawness of the north—that indescribable limitation of character which makes the Prussian Tory seem so painfully old in his ideas and so painfully new in his manners. Like the grape-vines that have sometimes been transplanted from the Rhineland to English hillsides, Lutheranism in the nineteenth century

gave only poor, thin fruit. It was too well supported by the State, especially through the compulsory religious teaching in schools, to fail ; but it never ripened to its original promise. The radical metaphysicians sapped its intellectual resources. Even when they outwardly conformed, it became ever clearer that a certain type of man could enjoy the consolations of religion, perhaps most purely, without entering either church or chapel. This type of man has multiplied, though it remains in a very small minority. Later, the early apostle of Social Democracy descended into the arena, with his openly materialist dogma, a declaration of war against all religions in partnership with the existing social order.

Over against every degree and kind of disbelief stood the Roman priest, sure of his faith and his authority, sure with all the memories of fourteen hundred years of more than royal rule ; no mere preacher of Sunday sermons, but an every-day and all-day shepherd of his flock ; a soldier in discipline, a mother in kindness, very often a scholar, an artist, and a gentleman. What was the divine right of the Hohenzollerns beside his ? Still the wave of prayer and praise rolled through the aisles built by sons of the Church Universal in the happy days when Germany was truly great. Well he knew his children, this humble spokesman of the Pope. Not by our laborious analysis, perhaps, but by instinct grown strong in daily shepherding, he knew the strength of the realism of the Roman system—not only the realism that had first captured the barbarian imagination of these borderlands, and had fed the art of the Middle Ages, the symbolism of ritual and sacrament, the regimen of confession and penance ; but also the more modern routine of charity, the Jesuit genius

in the discovery and training of talent, the special care to hold women and the home, the tremendous organization of the hierarchy. Every one, from prince to pauper, the most learned and the most ignorant, finds his place in the Catholic Church, on one condition not much more difficult than the oath of implicit obedience that every modern soldier must take; not more difficult, that is, for those who have brought themselves to see in the Church all that these others see in the Fatherland. And, on that one condition, the Church will help, defend, advance its children. It gives the natural conservatism of the rustic mind a glow of romance and a community of affection that no Protestant communion, and still less the State, can offer. All heretics are willing subjects of secular authority. What, then, if the State prove oppressive? The old Church alone is strong enough to offer a refuge from or a challenge to it. It is the one popular institution that has developed an art of peaceful rebellion, a power of successful resistance. Against an overbearing federal arm it becomes, as in Bavaria, a defender of a threatened kingdom. Against the aggression of Berlin it organizes the national spirit of the Poles, in banks, land purchase societies, the press, the boycott. In Alsace it keeps the flame of French culture alive. In Westphalia and the Rhenish province, it holds all the poor workmen who still feel the religious need. It is all things to all men. It adjusts itself marvellously to the most various circumstances. It saves men the trouble of thinking for themselves. Always and above all, its mind is concrete, its will single and swift. All the Bismarckian expedients were stolen from the Jesuit armoury. It is this spirit of social realism which is the fount of the strength of the Church in a time increasingly social and increasingly realistic; when the

old individualism and the old idealism—both essentially Protestant products—have broken down together.

The events of 1870-1 involved a reconstruction of the Catholic party organized in Prussia thirty years before for the maintenance and extension of the influence of the Church on civil life. The French clerical power was eclipsed. A German Empire was established under Protestant direction. On the very eve of the war, the doctrine of Papal infallibility had been proclaimed by the largest council of great clerics that ever met ; and after Sedan the temporal power of the Papacy had been destroyed through the withdrawal of the French troops from Rome. As a by-product of the German victory, the Holy Father was now a prisoner in the Vatican. Catholic Austria not daring to help him, France was prostrate ; and what could be hoped of the Third Republic ? After the proclamation of infallibility, less than ever could a situation so challenging and ominous be accepted. Yet common men fear omniscience only when it is demonstrably identical with omnipotence. The infallible Church must justify itself in action, or perish. Pio Nono and his minister, Antonelli, a lesser Bismarck, fully understood that the fate of the Roman system in the next generation would be decided in Germany. The word went forth ; and, in December, 1870, a solid group of fifty-six Catholic deputies appeared in the Prussian Landtag ; while early in the following year another group of sixty Catholic deputies appeared in the Reichstag, to combat National Liberalism, to defend denominational education and State rights against the new federal power, and generally to protect the interests of the Church. It was a struggle of forces rather than ideals, of interests, not principles. In Prussia the Centre party was conservative and monarchical (it had

good friends at Court), in the Reichstag conservative and particularist. In Bavaria it was conservative and agrarian; among the industrial population of the Rhineland it became more democratic, the better to meet the Socialist freethinker; in Alsace and eastern Prussia it championed outraged Nationalism. Everywhere it condemned civil marriage and secular education, and the authors of these measures—the Bismarckian party of middle-class imperialists, mostly commercial and professional men, the so-called National Liberals—and sought to protect the small farmer and small tradesmen class. Somewhat later¹ the party advocated a moderate protective tariff, “a healthy colonial policy,” the reduction of the term of military service and the strength of the army in time of peace, and denounced with increasing vigour “false Liberalism” and the revolutionary labour movement. Such was the Centrum.

It was the only substantial party which dared to offer to the triumphant Chancellor a resolute opposition. It asked him to help to re-establish the Temporal Power, and to insert in the imperial constitution a statement of Catholic rights like those conceded by the Prussian Constitution of 1850—direction of religious teaching in primary schools, freedom from State control of clerical appointments, a certain official protection. He answered at first evasively, and then, as the Alsacians and Poles became troublesome, with an angry refusal. In Bavaria there was a small Liberal Catholic movement hostile to the infallibility decree. The Bishops excommunicated a number of its professorial leaders. The Government,

¹ Manifestoes of December, 1878, August, 1879, and May, 1882. *Salomon*, II, 22-41.

although in a minority in Parliament and the kingdom, refused to dismiss them, and threatened to imprison priests who preached against these so-called "Old" Catholics and their official protectors. In Prussia the clergy refused to perform the marriage ceremony for Old Catholics. After an attempt at negotiation, which the Vatican boldly refused, Bismarck retorted by appointing lay inspectors of schools. The Minister of Public Worship resigning, Dr. Falk, a typical bureaucrat, was appointed to carry out what now took the dimensions of a campaign.

A Bavarian Liberal, Cardinal Gustav von Hohenlohe, was proposed as German Ambassador at the Vatican; the Pope refused. The Catholic section of the Prussian Ministry of Public Worship was then suppressed. "Don't be afraid, gentlemen," said Bismarck to the Reichstag on May 14, 1872, "we shall not go to Canossa again!" A granite column bearing these words was raised by popular subscription to mark the faith of simple folk in the Chancellor's invincibility—and the folly of the pride that comes before a fall. The Pope replied by denouncing the "persecution" of the Church. The Imperial Government retorted with a law expelling the Jesuits and other orders, and, after another Papal tirade, by withdrawing its Ambassador from the Vatican. The struggle culminated with the passage of the three series of "Falk laws," or "May Laws" of 1873-4-5, by which candidates for the priesthood were compelled to undergo a secular University course, bishops were required to submit clerical nominations for official sanction, and the supervision of seminaries was given to the State. In 1874 civil marriage was established in Prussia, and in the following year it became obligatory throughout the Empire. All monasteries were suppressed. Seven out of twelve Prussian bishops were

deposed ; many priests were imprisoned, banished, or fined ; and an ecclesiastical high court was established.

This, as Bismarck said, " completed the armoury " of the State. But the Church maintained its resistance, passive and active ; and in 1878 the Centre party in the Reichstag had increased its strength to 94 deputies, only four less than the National Liberals. Bismarck's irritation is exhibited in a conversation reported by Busch (April 11, 1877). In face of gathering difficulties and hostility at Court, apparently led by the Empress and the Radziwill family, he had offered to resign all his offices. " He gave me," says Busch, " various particulars concerning the Court clique and its aristocratic followers in the *Kreuzzeitung*, and among the high officials who had been shelved, as well as others who were still in office, and their manifold machinations, intrigues, and cabals against him ; at the same time giving me an account of his own measures. He drew a detailed picture of the Empress, who opposed him not only in his struggle with the clericals, but also in purely political questions. ' She always desired to play a part,' he said, ' first with the Liberals and the friends of enlightenment, now with the Ultramontanes and orthodox Court preachers. She has become pious now that she is growing old, and has, in consequence, taken up with the clerical circles on the Rhine. If she is not already a Catholic, she will be so very soon. . . . The Emperor is old, and allows himself to be influenced by her more and more. He has never had that strength of character with which many people credit him. She also interferes in foreign politics, having taken it into her head that it is her vocation to plead everywhere in favour of peace—to be an angel of peace. She, therefore, writes letters to foreign Sovereigns—to the Queen of England, for instance—which

she afterwards mentions to her consort, who, however, says nothing about them to me.' ”

Busch made free use of these and like statements ; and the following characteristic admonition was conveyed to him by Bucher a few days later : “ In the opinion of the prescribing physician, all the ingredients should not be administered in one dose. I fear the elixir may be too potent, and would suggest, if it be still possible, that two doses be made of it, and that a different medicine should be given in the interval.” A month later, the journalist-apothecary is informed that Queen Victoria has twice written to Bismarck direct, urging him to prevent war between Russia and Turkey, and that, the answers being evasive, she has written to the Emperor making him and Germany responsible for the outbreak of war. He accordingly writes a brutal article, telling royal “ Angels of Peace ” that Heaven is their home, their true home, “ and very doubtless their sentimental politics will afford them a plentiful supply of beautiful emotions.” This brings another mild reprimand. “ The doctor considers that the medicine prescribed is too strong and has been administered too rapidly. The patient will now require a long rest. I should like to see the next prescription before it is sent to the apothecary’s.”¹ Did we not well to speak of the Reptile Bureau *poisoning* public opinion ? But Busch could not plead, with Romeo’s apothecary : “ My poverty, and not my will, consents.” He conceived—such are the strange ethics of bureaucracy—that he was fulfilling a patriotic function of which any man might be proud.

Bismarck again remained in office ; but many circumstances demanded a new orientation of policy. The

¹ Busch : *Bismarck* II, 297–301.

fever of national self-confidence was already passing away. At the end of the war, the two nations had thrown back all their energies into industry and commerce, only to strike upon the most characteristic penalty of the singular economics of warfare. The vanquished suffered, but, as we may say, in a primitively regular manner. The soil of France still maintained most of her people, and the stockings of the peasant farmers proved equal to furnishing the milliards of indemnity,¹ and other milliards to restore public and private property. The national spirit, the single-mindedness of the Government, perhaps also the sympathy of England and America, helped to speed the recovery. In Germany there was a more complex play of forces. The war had taken away a million of the stoutest men from productive labour. The peasantry had no stockings out of which to make good this loss. The growth of machine industry and the newer methods of commerce and finance, though rapid, had not been long enough continued to provide any large floating surplus, had, indeed, absorbed all the free capital available in the country. The power of consumption had been gravely injured; and now, with the return and dispersal of the armies, the power of production was suddenly increased to its maximum. The expenditure of the French milliards—chiefly on railways and other public works, and armaments—created a class of manufacturers and workers which was to be, in succeeding years, dependent upon Government favours, and led also to a general rise of prices, and a fever of industrial speculation. In five years the number of joint-stock companies increased nearly five-fold. The reaction be-

¹ The huge indemnity was paid in 1873, instead of 1875, the necessary French loan being subscribed twelve times over.

came acute in 1874 ; and serious depression continued till 1879. Almost every branch of national industry was dislocated. The chief foreign customer of the Empire, France, was desperately impoverished ; Alsace-Lorraine became, after its inclusion in the Customs' Union, a severe competitor with other textile districts. While England poured her manufactures into Germany, Russia, America, and India began to invade central and west Europe with cheap grain, causing a decline of agricultural prices, and hence of land values, rents, and rural production. " It was toward 1877," said Bismarck, in a speech four years later, " that I was first struck with the general and growing distress in Germany as compared with France. I saw furnaces banked, the standard of welfare lowered, the general position of workmen becoming worse, and business as a whole terribly bad."

It was this evil fruit of the ransom he had himself extorted from conquered Paris that determined Bismarck's next momentous move—the establishment of a protective tariff, and, for that, a breach with the National Liberals, and an approach to the Conservatives and the Centre. It is important to realize that this abandonment of the free trade which had served Germany so well had none of the character of conviction and scientific deliberation that is sometimes attributed to German tariff policy. It was decided above all by the financial needs of the Empire, whose only revenue came from customs duties and the so-called matricular contributions of the federated States. The latter have been a constant source of trouble ; on the other hand, direct taxation is difficult in a federation, because it cuts into the fiscal plans and resources of the State Governments. Yet more revenue there must be, for the constantly increasing cost of arma-

ments, for railways, and for the measures of State Socialism which the Chancellor was beginning to conceive. Amid such an economic crisis, the easiest way to commend largely increased import duties was to give them a preferential character. But, both in the speech from the Throne, on February 7, 1879, and in Bismarck's speeches in the Reichstag, the provision of new sources of revenue for the Imperial Government, so as to relieve the States from their supplementary contributions and certain taxes necessary to maintain them, was named as the first object, and the "preservation of the home market for national production" as the second.

The National Liberals were already a declining force. Beyond the establishment of national unity, they had no large political aim. They reflected the individualism of the Manchester School without any of its attachment to a sober international policy, and with only a faint trace of its faith in free trade, land reform, and representative government. They had obtained civil marriage, lay inspection of schools, the long-delayed reform of local administration in East Prussia (peers had to be created in 1872 to pass this measure), a unified coinage for the Empire, an Imperial Bank, a common code of civil law and criminal procedure. But Bismarck had forced them to vote the increase of the peace footing of the army to 401,000 men, had wished this concession to be perpetual, and had accepted the Septennat, or vote for seven years, in 1874, only as a compromise. At the same time, he had extorted from the Reichstag a stern military code, and a sweeping law for the punishment of troublesome journalists. Worst of all, the three-class system of voting which closed the Prussian Landtag to popular representatives remained; and no step was

taken to subject the Imperial Executive to the Imperial Parliament.

The Conservatives, on the other hand, represented—often, it is true, in a crude and inelastic form—all the prejudices of Bismarck's younger life and the essentials of his present policy. They were the natural champions of authoritarian rule, of indirect taxation, of a moderate clericalism. They had shown their power in the Arnim scandal. Count Harry Arnim, German Ambassador in Paris, refused to lower his office to an agency for checking the recovery of France. Bismarck attacked him through the reptile press, and officially charged him with unfaithful conduct. Some leading Conservatives seem to have hoped to use Arnim to bring about the Chancellor's fall. They mistook their man. Arnim was dismissed in February, 1874, then arrested for refusing to give up despatches sent to him by Bismarck which were decided to be State property, and sentenced to imprisonment. In 1876 he was again condemned for having published an anonymous pamphlet against the Chancellor.¹ In the meantime, he had escaped prison by going abroad, where he died. The episode would suggest an almost incredible vagary of malice, were it not connected with the new phase of the army question and the effect of the astonishing recovery of France, together with the *revanche* agitation, upon the mind of the Wilhelmstrasse. It will be remembered that the reluctance of the North German

¹ Arnim's counsel, Prof. Holzendorff, told Sir Robert Morier that Bismarck sent to the public prosecutor "a document to be used in the second trial to prove that Arnim was a dishonourable man whose word could not be trusted. This document was a *procès-verbal*, going back to 1855, when Arnim was quite a young man, of a street row in which he had tripped up a watchman, and, on being taken up by the police, had given the name of Müller."

Reichstag to vote increased military supplies and full executive control was one factor in precipitating the war of 1870. Bismarck had then found it convenient "to try some bold stroke which should fill the public imagination and impress upon Parliament the necessity of not thwarting any of the schemes of the Government."¹ A repetition of the Parliamentary need brought a repetition of the extra-parliamentary strategy. Busch was set to work again; the servile press howled in chorus. Bismarck hinted, not obscurely, that France should suffer by another crushing defeat for the insolence of proving that she was not as "decadent" as had been supposed. In sending Prince Hohenlohe to Paris as Ambassador, in May, 1874, he instructed him that, "as to France, the chief point of interest for us was to see that she should not become so powerful internally, and of so much weight externally, as to secure herself allies. A republic and internal dissensions were the best guarantee of peace." Moltke declared, at a State banquet, that war must come, and the sooner the better. Queen Victoria made a personal appeal to the Emperor William. The danger passed, only to recur in more acute form in 1875, when, after alarmist letters from Geffcken, Stockmar, and other Liberals, and a warning article from the pen of de Blowitz in the *Times* (May 6), effective representations were made to the Court of Berlin by Queen Victoria and Lord Derby on the one hand, by Alexander II and Gortchakoff on the other.

Mortified by a rebuff which his own sovereign had so readily joined two foreign monarchs to administer, the first serious check to his policy of keeping Russia and

¹ Morier : *Memoirs*, II, 326.

² Hohenlohe, II, 106.

France estranged, Bismarck felt keenly the need of a firmer basis for his parliamentary action. "Raving like a maniac, and swearing that he would take his revenge" (as Lord Odo Russell reported¹), declaring that the *Times* had been bribed by French speculators, and that the Berlin press was in the hands of the Jesuits, the great *Real Politiker* knew perfectly well in his heart that, at sixty years of age, one cannot afford to have so many enemies. It was the international chess-board that chiefly interested him; and there, since an icy wind from the east had passed over the scene, his aim crystallized toward the Alliance with Austria (1879), which became the Triple Alliance in 1882. Domestic parties were what he had made them, groups of timorous intriguers. He had never pretended to hold his position on any ground of principle; what in a fully constitutional State must at least appear to be a conversion would be for him a mere change of strategy. He was large-minded enough to be ready to close an unprofitable feud.

So the Kulturkampf ended, and the Conservative-Protectionist era began. The Imperial Budget of 1877 showed a deficit. When the National Liberals rejected an increase of indirect taxation, the Chancellor dissolved the Reichstag, and, taking advantage of two attempts upon the life of the Emperor, in May and June, 1878, secured a Conservative-Catholic majority for a fiscal revolution. At the same time, Bismarck broke with the Prussian Liberal Ministers. Dr. Falk was replaced by a Conservative, von Puttkamer, a near relation of Bismarck. The Imperial Chancery, in which the Liberal Delbrück had enjoyed great latitude, was split into a number of secretariats directly responsible neither to Parliament nor to

¹ Fitzmaurice's *Granville*, II, 112-114.

the Emperor, but only to the Chancellor himself. Negotiations were opened with the new Pope, Leo XIII ; and gradually the " May Laws " were suspended and repealed. It was " a little C nossa."

The unconquered Church, however, maintained its independence ; as well it might, for it held by far the strongest party in the Reichstag. The tariff question and the reconciliation with the Church destroyed the National Liberals. Nineteen deputies headed by Lasker, Bamberger, Forckenbeck, and Bunsen, seceded and formed a new Liberal Union, which found little popular favour in this time of clashing extremes and base bargains, and, in 1884, coalesced with the Progressives. The remainder of the National Liberals (Bennigsen had already retired in disgust) accepted the Bismarckian policy. The Chancellor had ruined his old allies without finding an obedient majority. The rejection of cherished plans, such as the tobacco and brandy monopolies and biennial budgets, suggested, indeed, that, in howsoever unfavourable circumstances, a new spirit of political independence and vigour had entered into German life. In 1884, the Catholic-Conservative coalition broke down over the first vote of colonial subsidies ; and a new breach was made by the coercion of the Poles in East Prussia. In 1886, despite the Boulangist agitation in Paris, the Centre refused to extend the army *septennat* for more than three years ; and after the elections of January, 1887, Bismarck made a fresh coalition of Conservatives, the Imperial Party, and the National Liberals, on the military question. This *Kartel* was badly beaten in the elections of 1890 ; and Bismarck's proposal to revert to a Conservative-Catholic combination became a chief subject of his final quarrel with the present

Emperor. Meanwhile, he had carried through the Prussian Landtag a law permitting the re-establishment of the Catholic Orders, and had brought to a head his campaign against the Socialists, to which we must now turn.

III. THE RED PERIL

The Social Democratic Party, with its 970,000 paying members, its eighty-one daily newspapers, its 4,250,000 voters in the Reichstag elections of 1912, and its 9,000 municipal representatives, is the most considerable and dramatic political achievement of re-united Germany. Perhaps, also, it may be said to be the most characteristic; for, of the only two bodies that compare with it, the Roman Church is not characteristically German, and the Bismarckian State represents the weakness rather than the strength of the national character in a special phase of its development. Social Democracy is essentially German in its doctrinal basis, its evolutionary temper and its international appeal, its aptitude for regimentation, its hardihood of combat and of sacrifice. A late-comer in the field of Socialist thought, it was yet an original native creation; and by its inherent strength it has exerted an influence upon democratic movements in other lands comparable with that of Kant and Hegel in the sphere of philosophic speculation. It is completely the work of poor men, at first despised, afterwards hated, always persecuted by the governing class. Like Bismarckism and Clericalism, it is one of the major expres-

sions of Teutonic realism in the nineteenth century ; but, unlike them, it has in it a savour of the individualist idealism of the preceding era. In all three of these sharply divided channels of what should have been a single stream of national life, we see reflected in some measure the necessity of a transformation proper to the age of steam. The Church stands for the insufficiency of eighteenth century rationalism and for the impossibility of mere conquest. The State stands for the need of a larger and stronger union of hitherto divided communities, and a conscious direction of their social life. The Proletariat demands a radical change in the character of this union and this direction. Each of the three has in it a something illiberal, immoderate, authoritarian, even military, which makes us children of the sea-mists think of it rather as a force than a principle, a mass of material interests rather than a body of free opinion. But, whereas liberal Bismarckians and liberal Clericals have signally failed to accomplish anything, the Marxian movement, with all the realism of its "class consciousness," is steadily broadening out as it gathers into itself new elements of popular support ; and it offers to-day the only prospect of the development in the early future of a Germany once more free, liberal, and humane.

"Prior to Marx," says his biographer, Spargo, "all movements for social regeneration were essentially ideological. They made the issue a moral one. Existing social institutions were 'wicked,' the fruits of sin. To work for change was 'holy' and 'righteous' ; to resist was 'mammonish' and 'sinful.' But for the wickedness of the oppressor, life would be a paradise. . . . When this ethical appeal and argument proved unavailing, resort to violence was inevitable. Conspiracies, riotings,

and insurrections were the logical outcome of the old ideological conception of the nature of the problem." Perhaps there was more to be said for "the old ideological conception" than Marxians are disposed to allow. The new "scientific" view was well calculated to capture a people forward in educational, but backward in industrial and political development; it has not captured, though it has affected, the working-class mind in England, France, or the United States. Ideas are not immaculately conceived, but born in wedlock of fact with fact. Marx incarnated an idea necessarily arising in the place and time. The Industrial Revolution had worked wide havoc in the west. Every year saw some new aggravation of the social problem. Germans had the advantage of observing the facts in foreign experience before they were themselves overwhelmed. They saw the mischief of unrestrained capitalism, especially in England; the mischief of insurrectionary or conspirative protests and of utopian ideals, especially in France. Firearms were not then what they now are; but the street barricade was already ridiculous. Thus it was possible to open a new chapter in the records of man's effort to better his lot, a chapter in which criticism of the existing order was accompanied by criticism of previous attempts to improve it, and abundant scope was given to the ponderously inquisitive bent of the German mind. Coming from universities where faith in methodical thought was unquestioned, and where the realist and evolutionary reaction was in full swing, into poverty-stricken and powerless coteries of heretical dreamers in Paris and London, Marx saw his life-work rise plainly before him. Bismarck might build an empire with the sword; he would lay the foundations of world-democracy in the

minds of the victimized peoples. The materialistic interpretation of history would be his gospel; Engels would provide him with abundant parables from the history of Chartist England; a federation of industrial democracies, owning the essentials of production, would be the ideal; the gradual organization of the workers for peaceful political action the means. All his life Marx was subject to interruption by calls to combat some reviving efforts of Saint-Simonism, Fourierism, Proudhonism, some childish dream of a Cabet or a Weitling, some revolutionary spasm of a Mazzini or Bakunin. Nevertheless, he held on heroically to his main task, most nearly achieved in *Das Kapital*, of formulating the economic doctrine of democracy. He was denounced at first as a reactionary, a middle-class "intellectual," a mere theorist; then as a firebrand, the brain-centre of an international conspiracy; finally, he has been sub-edited by the Revisionists, the "higher critics" of Social Democracy. The impartial annalist will say that, whatever errors he fell into, his work was a *tour de force* of lasting importance, that he taught common men more of the meaning of history than all their schoolmasters put together, and that if in the last half century the European Labour movement has proceeded in the main upon peaceful lines, with an appeal to reason rather than to violence: if to-day it is a sternly disciplined Socialism, not a loose Anarchism or Syndicalism, that commands the allegiance of millions of workers, it is due, more than any man, to Karl Marx.

For Marx, the essential thing in the history of mankind is a ceaseless, unavoidable evolution out of one economic state into another. The process is continuous, but we may roughly define its stages; and each stage will be

found to consist in a struggle between a possessing and a non-possessing class. The creation of these classes arises from the fundamental business of society, the production of wealth ; "and classes are transformed as new phases of production arise. Always, the economic conditions which decide the distribution of wealth decide also the distribution of political power, and, indirectly, the prevalent social habits and ideas. The class struggle is, therefore, doubly necessitated. " Freeman and slave, patrician and plebeian, lord and serf, guildmaster and journeyman, in a word, oppressor and oppressed, stood in constant opposition to one another, carried on an uninterrupted fight, now veiled, now open—a fight that each time ended either in a revolutionary reconstruction of society at large, or in the common ruin of the contending classes." ¹ Revolution is not a catastrophic event "toward which the whole creation moves" ; it is every repeated high-pressure point in an unceasing evolutionary process. Revolutions are not made by individuals ; they are crises in an unbroken history of class opposition. The fruit falls when it is ripe. Once more, within the last two centuries, the process of production has been transformed. The possessing and non-possessing classes have become newly and more sharply defined. The landlord has given place to the money-lord, the serf to the wage-earner, the home-worker to the factory worker.

Value is proportionate to labour power ; it is the characteristic of the wage system to rob the labourer of the surplus value he creates over and above the cost of his maintenance. Social life takes more and more the form of a struggle between two broad classes, the bour-

¹ *The Communist Manifesto*, 1848.

geoisie and the proletariat. The struggle becomes more and more acute as the capitalists become fewer and the workers more miserable. Victory is ever to the stronger ; and the chief element of strength is a consciousness of one's interests. The bourgeoisie are successful because they are conscious of their class interest, and resolutely defend it. Individual philanthropists may desert their class ; these are but insignificant exceptions to the rule. The triumph of the great mass of workers, whose interest is identical, can only come by the development of a " class consciousness," which will enable them peacefully, by weight of numbers and organization, to take over both the political power of the State and the machinery of production and exchange, and so to adopt a juster and healthier division of labour and wealth. This end may be far off. In the meantime, even while the few continue to own the means of production, many ameliorations may be obtained ; and this is the purpose of the " class struggle." Especially, the faithful are admonished to sink national differences. Capital is becoming international ; with infinitely greater conviction should labour join hands across the frontiers. " Proletarians of all lands, unite ! " The end, in a state of socialized industry, may be far off ; but it is inevitable, for no alternative can be conceived, unless society is to go back upon its steps, which would mean a still greater revolution. Capitalism is " like the sorcerer who is no longer able to control the powers he has called up from the nether world." It is digging its own grave ; all that Socialists can or need do is to expedite its predestined transformation. Their convictions will be all the more effective to that end because they are the expression also of natural law and material interest.

Such, in briefest outline, is the Marxian doctrine. We are not concerned here to strike any balance of truth and error in it,¹ or to indicate inconsistencies and omissions, or even to characterize it except in so far as may be necessary to a better appreciation of the German mind and the present political and industrial situation in the Empire. Regarded thus, as a symptom, it is of the utmost significance. At the moment, the new heresy must have seemed to have little to favour it. Karl Marx, living the sad life of a poor exile in London (how proud the million-headed city should be of the great guests who have enjoyed its chill hospitality !), with no weapon but his pen, and hard work to keep the wolf from the door of his lodgings in Soho and Haverstock Hill, could never be more than the thinker and the distant adviser. Years passed ere Germany paid any heed to his message ; and it was a more romantic and a smaller personality, Ferdinand Lassalle, who actually founded the independent labour movement in Germany, by establishing in 1863, the *Allgemeine Deutsche Arbeiterverein*. The brilliant son of a wealthy Jew—"das Wunderkind," Humboldt called him—Lassalle had already achieved notoriety by his championship of Countess Hatzfeldt, by six months'

¹ For the general reader restricted to English, four volumes which may be chosen from a multitude as of special use on the whole subject are : *Modern Socialism as Set Forth by Socialists, in their Speeches, Writings, and Programmes*, edited by R. C. K. Ensor (Harper) ; *Evolutionary Socialism*, by Eduard Bernstein, the Revisionist leader (Independent Labour Party) ; Prof. Werner Sombart's *Socialism and the Socialist Movement* (Dent) ; and *The Socialist Movement*, by J. R. MacDonald, M.P. (Williams & Norgate). The first-named contains passages from utterances of all the chief Socialist leaders, the second and third much criticism, and the last a bibliography. See also Mr. W. H. Dawson's *German Socialism and Ferdinand Lassalle*, and *Bismarck and State Socialism*.

imprisonment for participation in the revolution of 1848 and repeated subsequent trials, and by a great debate in which he routed Schulze-Delitzsch, the Liberal advocate of co-operation. In the year before his tragic death in Geneva (1864), he made a meteoric campaign of propaganda in the Rhineland and the north. Lassalle's criticism of the existing order was Socialistic; but his ideal was a network of co-operative productive associations, dividing the product of their labour, under a democratic State. The German Workmen's Union only then counted 4,600 members. But the time was ripening. Factories were springing up like a night-growth of mushrooms. Darwin and Wallace were providing a biological basis for the theory of evolution, Spencer a social interpretation. Above all, Marx found his first missionaries. The power of faithful exposition of other men's ideas is a peculiarly German talent, much prized and assiduously cultivated.

Though of poor parentage, Liebknecht, like Marx, was a man of university education. After the Baden outbreaks of 1848, he was imprisoned, and lived in exile till 1862, becoming a pupil of Marx in London. On returning to Germany, he found work on the *North German Gazette* until it became a Bismarckian organ, and then joined Lassalle's movement. August Bebel, son of a Prussian non-commissioned officer, and now a young turner in Leipzig, was already the moving spirit of several workmen's societies of a Liberal or Catholic complexion; and when Lassalle, early in 1863, proposed the initiation of an independent labour movement, Bebel not only refused to join him, but threw himself more actively into the work of the orthodox bodies. Where Lassalle had failed, however, Liebknecht quickly suc-

ceeded. The establishment of a new organization on a specifically Marxian basis was the first-fruit of a lifelong friendship of Liebknecht and Bebel. At meetings in Nuremberg, in 1868, and Eisenach in 1869, it was decided to cut adrift from the Liberal Co-operative groups, and to adopt the programme of the International and the name of the Social Democratic Labour Party. Meanwhile, both men had served short terms of imprisonment, and both had been returned for Saxon constituencies to the North German Reichstag. During the war they protested against the annexation of Alsace-Lorraine. They were arrested for the publication of treasonable writings, and tried early in 1872, Liebknecht being sentenced to two years', and Bebel to two years and nine months' imprisonment. In 1874, though still in prison, they were elected with eight other Socialists to the Reichstag of the Empire, polling a total of 450,000 votes.

Bismarck, who had been strongly attracted to Lassalle, and who knew from Bucher the character of the Marxian agitation, had had the shrewd idea, during the last stage of the war, of using it as a bogey to keep Russia and France estranged¹, and to this end had proposed joint action of the Powers against the International. A year later he was apparently less interested in the subject.

¹ In June, 1871, Busch notes this, adding: "There are grounds for believing that the motive for raising the whole subject was less the danger of the Socialist organization (which, however, was strongly emphasized by me in the Press under instructions from the Chief) than the opportunity which would be thereby afforded of bringing all the Powers together for the consideration in common of *one* question, and in particular of producing a rapprochement between two of them. In other words, the main object of the manœuvre was to maintain the antagonism between Russia and France, the land of the Commune, by exaggerating the danger of the International, and to win over Austria."

The Kulturkampf absorbed him ; and it appeared at this time to Count Schuvaloff that Bismarck " did not wish unnecessarily to turn against the Government so useful a weapon as the Socialist movement might ultimately prove to be against clerical encroachments." The growth of the Socialist agitation marked by the Gotha Congress in May, 1875, at which the Lassalleans were completely absorbed, became, however, a chief reason for his making peace with the Roman Catholic Church and adopting a Protectionist policy. He had already set the Prussian police to work, with the immediate result of reviving the old insurrectionary leaven in labour circles. The Reichstag refused in 1874 and 1876 proposals to establish a sterner press censorship ; and in the elections of 1877 the number of Socialist deputies rose to 12, with a total vote of 493,000, over nine per cent. of the votes polled. On May 11, 1878, a young hooligan, named Hödel, shot at the Emperor William ; and two days later the great anti-Socialist campaign opened.

The first Coercion Bill, failing National Liberal support, was rejected by the Reichstag. A few days afterwards the country was startled by the news that a Dr. Nobiling had fired at the Emperor, and wounded him. A people whom centuries of repression have made the most law-abiding in the world felt itself outraged by these unwonted events. Bismarck dissolved the Reichstag to a cry of " law and order." The Liberal parties lost their majority ; and a new Bill was introduced to suppress all associations, meetings, or publications " having for their aim the subversion of the social order," or " in which Socialist tendencies appeared in such a way as to endanger the public peace, and in particular the harmony between different classes of the population." It author-

ized the seizure of Socialist publications, the prohibition or closure of meetings, the establishment of a minor state of siege, and the expulsion of objectionable individuals. In vain did Bebel point to the Socialistic opinions of men like Rodbertus, Schäffle, Roscher, Wagner, Brentano, and Schmoller. The Bill was carried by 221 votes to 149, and at once came into force. The result was to drive the labour agitation underground, to warm its doctrinal bond to the semblance of a religion, and to rob the rival Liberal trade unions formed by Dr. Max Hirsch "on the English model" of any chance of success. The circumstances of the moment seemed clearly to confirm Marx's view of the necessity of a political revolution; and, while trade unionism even of the narrower type was being made impossible, the great political weapon, universal suffrage, remained. The law, thrice renewed, was in operation till 1890. It is reckoned that in these twelve years 332 societies were dissolved, including 95 trade unions and 106 political clubs; 1,400 publications were suppressed, 1,500 persons condemned to prison (suffering a total of 830 years' incarceration), and 900 expelled.

The open organization of the party was destroyed. But a host of apparently innocent bodies, choral societies, smoking clubs, trade unions, and co-operative societies, carried on the work, with the aid of secretly printed or smuggled journals, and congresses held abroad. The Reichstag, too, continued to provide an open national platform for the ablest leaders; and in the 1881 elections 312,000 votes were polled. A momentary impulse was given to the small anarchist section led by Johann Most and Hasselmann. Then the Marxian idea vindicated itself. In 1884, twenty-four seats were captured (two each in Berlin, Hamburg, and Breslau) with 550,000

votes. In the following year, after a sensational trial at Freiburg, nine Socialists, including Bebel, von Vollmar, Auer, and three other deputies, were charged with taking part in a secret and illegal organization, and sent to prison for periods of from six to nine months. Many similar trials followed, there being in one case eighty-seven defendants. In 1887, owing to the war scare, all but eleven of the Socialist seats were lost, though the total vote increased to 763,000. The Social Democrats were, indeed, the less able to face a military-patriotic appeal since they advocated universal military service, albeit in a form not then generally understood, akin to the Swiss militia system. In 1890 they more than made good the ground lost, tripling their seats (thirty-five), and doubling their vote (1,427,000). Eleven years of coercion had created a million Socialist votes. Since then, with the exception of the 1907 election, the party has steadily progressed, until to-day it includes more than a quarter of the strength of the Reichstag, a third of the active electorate, and two hundred and twenty members in the parliaments of the federated States.

Except under the influence of temper, which was only frequent at a later time in his career, Bismarck was too clear-sighted to be content with the ancient methods of "resolute government." Open repression had arrayed the whole force of the Catholic Church against him. With the single aim of maintaining arbitrary rule in Berlin, he was unprejudiced in the choice of means. Depending upon an alliance of landlords, soldiers, and bureaucrats, he brought to his task a freedom of outlook and resource that often disturbed them grievously, and could only be justified by success. The "red spectre" which frightened Conservatives and Liberals had no terrors for him. He

probably liked Liebknecht and Bebel in his heart, as he had liked Lassalle ; for there was always this saving salt in Bismarck's blood—he faced facts, and he respected stout manhood, as he hated weaklings and dreamers. No one knew better the stupidity of most of his supporters, especially the middle-class pedlars of the political market : and he knew the grave reality of labour discontent arising from the crisis after the war. Not the coercion laws alone, but the whole range of tariff, social, and commercial legislation which he designed in his last years of office must, therefore, be regarded as his reply to the Social Democratic agitation. A bold, perhaps a reckless plan, that of stealing Marxian thunder to make the Empire more popular. But it must be remembered that the personal qualities which feed the individualism of our politics are exactly those that were and are least developed in the German nature, of old habit adapted to paternal rule. To that difference Germany already owed its priority in education and municipal enterprise, and was to owe its splendid system of railways and canals, and its maritime services, if also its backwardness in some other important respects. The orthodox political economy, always an alien product (*das Manchestertum*, as Professor Schmoller called it at the first meeting of the *Verein für Sozial Politik* in 1873), had been banned by the "Academic Socialists," a company of professorial and official Liberals including Roscher, Brentano, Nasse of Berlin, Conrad of Halle, and Knies of Heidelberg, who advocated social aid and moderate State intervention. The Catholic Church had had a "Christian Socialist" wing for thirty years ; and the Court preacher in Berlin, Adolf Stöcker, started a like Protestant movement in 1877, forming two societies, the one to capture the

working men, and the other to interest the comfortable classes. Socialism, of sorts, was in the air.

The Chancellor, who had advocated State railways in 1847, had no principles to unlearn, and, though he accepted the aid of the academicians, he knew an argument better than all their treatises. What does the man-in-the-street care about the socialization of the State in some distant future? Give him a few crumbs of material benefit here and now, and he will care little who directs the machine. Marx demands self-government and self-possession; Bismarck gives a new dose of benevolence—and bureaucracy. The State shall go into business, taking profits instead of new taxation, and making these tiresome workmen government servants. A protective tariff will secure the agrarian and bourgeois vote, and at the same time bring in funds for the enlargement of the army and navy. Finally, the State will help every one to insure himself against sickness, accident, unemployment, and old age. Profits, employment, protection, insurance, a “full dinner pail” and a “stake in the country” for the humblest. True, wages must rise, more certainly still prices must rise; but the bottomless lucky-bag will satisfy every claim. New Ministries, commissions, directorates, inspectorates, in the twenty-six federated States and their thousands of local administrative districts; a vast new hierarchy to be added to the imposing civilian army of Reichskanzler Prinz Otto von Bismarck. Six young men named Shaw, Webb, Olivier, Massingham, Bland, and Wallas, were exercising their wits about this time in the composition of *Fabian Essays*. If Bismarck had been a contributor to the reviews, like Mr. Gladstone, instead of a predecessor of Lord Northcliffe in the *coulisses* of the new journalism, he could have given the “Gas and

Water Socialists " of England something to reflect upon.

His first step was to try to get the whole of the railways of the country transferred to the Empire; and, had that been possible, the tariff would have been less rapidly developed. The federated governments were nowise disposed thus to give away their most profitable undertakings; but all of the 37,000 miles of German lines, except a trivial margin, are to-day State property, and the administration is largely unified under an Imperial Board established in 1873. " Particularism " takes many shapes. It was only under threats, when parts of their harbours had been excepted as free ports, and large Imperial grants had been made for improvements, that Hamburg and Bremen were induced to come into the Zollverein; and the canal projects which were a continuation of Bismarck's policy have often been obstructed by the jealousy of the Prussian Agrarians. Even the protective tariff, represented by its authors as a universal panacea, had to be commended in 1879 by a promise of special measures for " the remedying of social ills."

As a preliminary step, a Prussian " Political Economy Council " was formed in November, 1880. In February, 1881, in announcing an Accident Assurance Bill, the speech from the Throne set forth the principle that " a remedy cannot be sought only in the repression of Socialist excesses; there must be simultaneously a positive advancement of the welfare of the working classes." The Chancellor again proclaimed the " right to work " as laid down in the Prussian common law. " The whole matter," he said, " centres in the question: Is it the duty of the State, or not, to provide for its helpless citizens? I maintain that it is its duty, that it is the duty not only of the ' Christian State,' as I ventured once to call it

when speaking of 'practical Christianity,' but of every State." Hence the series of Insurance laws—against sickness (June, 1883, supplemented in 1892), accident (July, 1884), invalidity and old age (June, 1889, coming into operation, April, 1891, amended in 1899)¹—the women's and children's labour laws of 1891, and the Sunday labour laws of 1891 and 1897. Although State-aided insurance has not abolished poor relief, although the benefits afforded are often grievously inadequate, and there are still many administrative difficulties, these laws certainly represented at the time a step in social legislation of unprecedented boldness and magnitude. Taken in conjunction with the admirable enterprise, skill, and vigilance of the great municipalities, their care for technical and scientific instruction, public health and convenience, their experiments in town-planning and philanthropy, these measures offer conclusive proof of the strength of the communal spirit in German society, and its peculiar aptitude for a work in which *expertise* and the faculty of organization are chiefly needed.

All this is magnificent ; yet it has solved neither the social nor the political problem—in some ways it has actually aggravated them. It is not the serf who rebels, nor in the slum that the democratic spirit thrives. Every

¹ Mr. W. Harbutt Dawson's recent volume *Social Insurance in Germany, 1883-1911*, relieves us from the necessity of explaining them. For sickness insurance, workmen pay two-thirds and employers one-third of the contributions. The accident insurance system is simply one of employers' liability. For invalidity and old age insurance, workmen and employers each pay half of the contributions, and the State adds £2 10s. a year to each pension. The old age pension is due at 70, contributions having been made for 1,200 weeks. The amount spent in compensation in 1908 was £33,520,000, about a half of this being for sickness, against which some thirteen million persons are insured. The administration is to a great extent decentralized,

material improvement sets up incalculable reactions. You cannot clean men's bodies without bracing their minds; you cannot put even the docile Teuton into modern schools and factories, and expect him to remain in the mental condition to which Metternich reduced his grandfather. The Social Democrat saw in Bismarckian Socialism not merely a series of doles his agitation had compelled, but a formal confession of the truth of his economic principle. If the railways should be nationalized, why not the canals, the ships, the mines, and the land itself? So in the political sphere, if direct and universal suffrage was proper for the Reichstag, why not for the Prussian Landtag also? If Germany could show such an advance over England, France, and the United States in social legislation, why could she not be entrusted with the crown of representative government, an Executive responsible to the people or their deputies, and be endowed with full freedom of industrial and political combination? So, too, in the sphere of world relations, now growing more and more important: how could any clear mind acquainted with the course of recent German history fail to be carried forward upon the hope of a yet wider federation, a larger Zollverein? As Bismarck thought he had united the Empire by war, so he thought the peace of Europe was secured by the bayonets of its strongest army. Men who had themselves paid the blood tax, who were now meeting their French and British fellows in international labour congresses, whose brothers or children sent home letters redolent of the free air of America, saw these matters from a very different angle. The old Germany was passing away, the spirit of Sedan had flickered out; as the young Bismarckian journalist observed, man cannot live on memories, however drama-

tic. The Socialist, indeed, had nearer memories—of prison, expulsion, and petty persecution, of desperate labours to help other victims, and to keep the lamp of his ideal burning. He emerged from the catacombs, with his doctrine and his martyrology, to find some of his precepts taken over by his Imperial persecutors, and his only intellectual enemy, the individualist Liberal, discredited and broken. More than ever, the Marxian revolution appeared inevitable.

The Christian Socialist, Catholic or Evangelical, still begged him to abandon the sterile ground of unbelief, to be more patient and conciliatory, more grateful for immediate benefits—the Protestant added, more patriotic. But the Christian Socialists showed all the instability of a middle position in a time of trial and flux. They had not suffered, and an easy faith makes few converts. They asked for factory acts, sanitary reform, graduated income tax, death duties, and an extension of Government works, but in a very gentle voice. Some of their demands, for instance, a modified re-establishment of the guild system, with compulsory apprenticeship, smacked of the programmes of various small traders' and shopkeepers' organizations which are always seeking legal protection from competing businesses, and sighing for a neo-feudal organization of society. Their desire to enlist Conservative help on such lines as these was more evident than their wish to secure the workman the right of free combination. Finally, they fell into the arms of that least respectable kind of Conservative, the Anti-Semite.

The Jews of Germany number only about one per cent. of the population; they are not crowded together in any squalid Pale, as in Russia. Except in the eastern provinces, they are not generally notorious as usurers.

Nevertheless, it was, perhaps, inevitable in a country so long vexed by problems of national and religious unity that a body obstinately bent on maintaining its separate religion, social customs, and culture, should be regarded with peculiar jealousy ; and this was sharpened to positive antipathy as the slow broadening of opportunity in public life revealed the sharper, subtler intellect of the Jew, and its inevitably liberal and cosmopolitan bias. During the Philosophic period, respect for brains had prevailed in their behalf. The Romantic reaction, especially in the pietistic atmosphere of the Hohenzollern Court, favoured the growth of common prejudice. Wolfgang Menzel nicknamed Young Germany "Young Palestine." The Catholic Bishop von Ketteler scoffed at the patriotic professions of the Jew, Bamberger, the National Liberal deputy for Mainz. Lasker and other leading members of the same party were Jews. Worse still, Marx and Lassalle and some of their successors were Jews. So, at the other end of the scale, were the great bankers and financiers. "Among educated Germans who would protest indignantly against a charge of intolerance, one cry is heard—'*Die Juden sind unser Unglück*' (the Jews are our mistfortune)," said the patriotic historian, von Treitschke. These words, repeated by Puttkamer in the Prussian Diet in February, 1880, as an argument in favour of denominational education, would be difficult to comprehend did we not recall the abnormal character of the time. Bismarck was making peace with the Catholics, throwing over the Liberals, and prosecuting the Socialists. The strain of the economic crisis had been aggravated by a general confusion of political issues. At such a moment men seek an easy victim,

Stöcker, finding the organized workmen intractable, and the small traders and officials more open to his ideas, honestly abominating the materialist Marxians and the Liberal exponents of *das Manchestertum*, was drawn gradually into the proclamation of a Tory Democratic ideal, having (while Benjamin Disraeli was at the height of his power in England—it is a notable illustration of the different outlook of the two nations) Anti-Semitism for its cheapest ground of appeal. The Jews were denounced at public meetings as enemies of the State; their exclusion from public offices was demanded; women's associations were formed to boycott them; they were insulted and assaulted in the streets of Berlin. In July, 1881, there were some small anti-Jewish riots. When a Berlin pastor refused to take the oath before a Jewish judge, in January, 1883, Stöcker hailed his words as "the justified outcry of an outraged conscience." An influx of Jewish refugees from Russia, then in full reaction after the Nihilist conspiracies, momentarily aggravated the situation. Bismarck, however, had little in common with the St. Petersburg type of Minister, and had no wish that his later record should be marred by incidents appropriate in holy Kief. His *Kartel* of 1887-90 made it necessary that Conservative attacks upon the National Liberals should cease. Stöcker then lost his political standing; and in 1895 he was deprived of his living by the Prussian Evangelical Church Council. Anti-Semitism was not extinguished (the "Tivoli Programme" of the Conservative Party, in December, 1892, demanded the removal of "demoralising Jewish influence" and of the privileges of money-capital, especially a stricter supervision of Stock Exchange business); but it ceased to be a threatening social force.

The social reformers, Christian and academic, have, no doubt, exercised an indirect influence in the improvement of industrial conditions by the voluntary action of employers. Much enterprise has been shown, especially in the north-west, in the establishment of workmen's model dwellings, baths, amusement halls, and restaurants on factory premises, crèches, profit-sharing, and other humane and attractive arrangements. But it is with these as with the Catholic and the Hirsch-Duncker trade unions, which, intended to work in considerable if not entire sympathy with the employers, have only about 300,000 and 150,000 members respectively, as compared with the 2,000,000 of the "Free" or Socialistic Unions. *Patriarchalism* is not always liberally, or even logically, applied. A workman who is "black-listed" for taking in a Socialist paper or speaking at a Socialist meeting will not make large allowances for philanthropic expenditure which, in any case, he regards as a substitute for higher wages. Patronage and a friendly co-operation of employers and employed are presumed in the Bismarckian and subsequent social legislation. The State itself declares the injustice of an unrestricted individualism, and the need of protecting and aiding the humbler workers. But there is no warmth of conviction in this declaration of social duty. The Catholic Church often succeeds in establishing a certain harmony of rich and poor among the faithful. The labourer of East Prussia might be contented with the patronage of Church and State; not so the skilled artizan of the west, educated by reading and discussion as well as by a good schooling. The Social Democratic Party has given him a cause, an ideal, which he can embrace as something peculiarly his own; a food for heart and brain, something very near religion.

If, for the mass of men, object-lessons, plainly visible proofs, be needed, the round of common life offers them in plenty—the ostentation of the *nouveaux riches*, the roughness of sergeants in the barracks, the arrogance of officers in public places, a thousand absurd bureaucratic restrictions, the petty despotism of the police, the latest market prices. Not long since, the German, in social and political life, was a child and thought as a child ; to-day, he wishes to put away childish things, to be treated as a grown man. He finds (to cite, not from the list of personal grievances, but from the public law, a single instance) all endeavours blocked by a Prussian suffrage decree dating back to the summer of 1849. The philosophy of the indirect three-class vote is there stated with a frankness that looks very naïve in the light of the twentieth century : “ The strength of citizenship, of the harmonious co-operation on which the continuance and prosperity of society essentially depend, is in part physical or material, in part spiritual or intellectual. Among the elements of material strength, the power of contribution (taxation) occupies a primordial place. It gives the general measure of the capacity of the individual for self-government. . . There is ground for anticipating a good result from the allocation of voting power according to taxation, for social relations are ultimately established in such a way that, if the poorest members of the State represent the largest sum of physical power, the greatest proportion of intellectual power is found among the richest ; hence the preponderance assured, apparently, to material goods falls in reality to intelligence.”¹ In shorter terms, society consists of an ass and his master. The actual arrangements by which effect is given to this principle—the

¹ Gerlach, *Die Geschichte des preussischen Wahlrechts*.

process of indirect voting by oral declaration, and the division of the constituency into three classes of taxpayers equal in their collective tax capacity, the few rich, the larger middle-class, and the host of the poor, each class with equal collective voting power—is bad enough. But what may be tolerated or moderately resented when it is only a slowly yielding political expedient becomes an open abomination when it is authoritatively defended as embodying a doctrine of social excellence.

The advance of England toward a democratic suffrage has been slow and haphazard, and is still unfinished. But the process, logically not very admirable, has had this practical and moral advantage over German experience: it has proceeded as and when the people demanded it, and on no other grounds, higher or lower. Germany has here, as in other matters, the two extremes without the useful mean. Universal suffrage, at the age of twenty-five, is the rule of the Empire, and of some of the States. Prussia, the major State of the Empire, is declared incapable of wisely using such a trust. At the same time, while Bismarck confessed that he only established the Reichstag suffrage as a check upon the separate States and their sovereigns, and would gladly revoke it, the Prussian system is ostensibly based, not upon the selfish interests of the landed nobility, but upon a "primordial" doctrine, still necessary for the safety of the State: Wealth and intelligence are identical; a hundred poor men are politically equal to one rich man. A State which proclaims this principle at one moment, and vaunts its century of compulsory education the next, must stand condemned even before a tribunal of rational conservatives. A State which, based upon such a principle, has established universal suffrage for

its imperial subjects, and seeks credit for philanthropic legislation of a socialistic character enacted by universal suffrage, is divided against itself, and cannot permanently stand.

To the unsympathetic or superficial observer, Social Democracy may seem sometimes too saturated with sentiment, at others too metaphysical, too dogmatic, too sourly critical. There is, no doubt, much repetition of the Marxian prophecies, anticipation of a more or less catastrophic change in which the hated structure of capitalistic employment is to disappear, and the poor man is to come by his own. With all its faults, however, the Marxian Church is a wonderful product, in quality as well as in numbers. It has given the people a faith and a hope. It has taught them to read history, and make for themselves studies which are as much closed as Egyptian hieroglyphics to most of the workers in other lands. It has brought back principle, and co-operation on a basis of principle, into German politics. It has compelled the nation, the German Governments, and to some extent the whole western world, to face certain fundamental facts in modern society which other parties have been too ready to ignore. It has asserted the claim of women to a regular and equal part in public life (the party has 108,000 women members). Above all, it has vindicated the belief that greater than patronage and stronger than any effort of coercion or corruption is the right of a nation to decide freely its own destinies.

IV. THE TWO ALLIANCES

In the field of foreign affairs, also, the success of the Bismarckian policy was at least questionable. It hardened the political temper of all the western States, producing a habit of suspicion and distrust from which Germany, in common with the world at large, has suffered. On the Continent it compelled an imitation of the German military system, and an unceasing competition in armament and re-armament. Throughout the world, except England and Holland, it provoked a reaction of protective tariffs which has injured Germany as much as her competitors. It helped to precipitate Britain and France, especially, into a career of imperial expansion, so that, when Germany was ready to follow suit, the best of the lands in Africa and Asia were already taken. Bismarck was so far from anticipating this result that, thinking only of the immediate future, he invited France to engage herself in Tunis and Morocco, and watched with cynical satisfaction the embroilment of England in Egypt and South Africa. And the violence of his animus against France at length brought about the alliance of the Republic and the Russian Tsardom which he had always feared.

For four years after the war, the three Emperors maintained a close friendship (known as the Dreikaiserbund, but no treaty was signed), with Italy following in their wake. Russia's interference on behalf of France in the summer of 1875 broke this accord. At the Berlin Congress, over which Bismarck presided as "honest broker" (June-July, 1878), he revenged himself by helping to rob Russia of the fruit of her victories, and, by turning Austria's attention definitely from Central

Europe to the Balkans, ensured a competition between Austria and Russia in which Germany might at any time intervene, as well as a commercial penetration of the near East by which Germany would greatly benefit. The logic of the Chancellor's policy still pointed to a league of the three Empires. Bad temper broke this habit of Bismarck's mind, and turned him to Vienna for the partner who, needing most (Russia needed only money, which Germany could not lend), could pay most. So, in October, 1879, was concluded the alliance—of mutual defence as against Russia or a Russo-French combination, of benevolent neutrality as against France alone—which, by the adhesion of Italy in 1882, became the Triple Alliance.¹ "By the threats of the Russian press, we were forced to make a choice between our two friends which I had long avoided." Such a choice, for Bismarck, meant, however, only a provisional change of strategy, to be promptly revised as circumstances should suggest. Except the Emperor's preferences, he was fettered by no rule of continuity; and his words, as well as his actions, show that he refused to be bound by more particular scruples. "The observation of treaties between great States is only conditional as soon as the struggle for life puts them to the proof. No great people would ever consent to sacrifice its existence for a treaty." The interpretation of such a political axiom is everything; and as, for Bismarck, the "struggle for life" was ceaseless, he had ever an excuse for liberating himself from irksome obligations. He only saw international relations as a series of diplomatic manoeuvres.

¹ The text of the Austro-German Treaty, as published by the signatories in 1888, will be found at pp. 128-9 of M. André Tardieu's *France and the Alliances*, and at pp. 28-9 of M. Lémonon's *L'Europe et La Politique Britannique*.

Obsessed, as he admitted to Gortchakoff, by the fear of coalitions, he was perpetually engaged in intrigues to bring other Powers within his own orbit, to prevent them from uniting without his approval, and even to embroil them in some distant adventure or among themselves. Undoubtedly, his personal prestige waxed till near the end in the Foreign Offices, still dominated by aristocratic traditions, and habitually dull of mind. If he spoke, men listened with trepidation; if he refrained from speaking, they were stricken with alarm. He stirred the wits of his competitors; but in doing so he debased the currency of diplomatic life, creating precedents of duplicity and sharp practice that have been only too readily followed by lesser men, and a temper of distrust that still poisons the intercourse of the European States. This was illustrated during the 'eighties even in the still comparatively distant field of Anglo-German relations.

Opposition to France and Russia, friendship with the German States—such was the ancient tradition of British foreign policy. France, as a colonial and maritime Power, competed with the island kingdom at a hundred points; from France alone was invasion to be feared. Russia was doubly suspect for her internal tyranny and for her glacier-like gravitation to the South, which threatened some day to sever England's communications through the Suez Canal, and brought a powerful enemy ever nearer to the Indian frontier. Germany presented none of these points of contact; and during her free trade period she offered the greater part of Central Europe as an open market for British goods. There remained, indeed, a difference of political character, a factor in international relations to which many continental writers fail to give due weight. For a century past, however they might

be affected by other considerations, Englishmen have been drawn toward America and France by the feeling that these countries share with Britain the idea of liberal progress. Bismarck's three wars could not but chill the old Anglo-German friendship. Nevertheless, good relations generally prevailed between London and Berlin for more than a decade after the Franco-German war. Then, gradually, Bismarck's pretensions, his feud with the liberal Crown Prince, and the institution of a protective tariff produced a chillier temper.

Bismarck regarded Mr. Gladstone ("Professor Gladstone," he scornfully called him), who succeeded Peaconsfield in the Premiership in January, 1879, as possessed of all the wickedness of a *Centrum* leader. Dreading above all a Russo-French alliance, however, he desired a *rapprochement* with England, and better relations with France. To this end, he offered the British Government a free hand in the coercion of Turkey¹ and in the conquest of Egypt, encouraged France to occupy Tunis and Tonkin, and probably also advised Italy to look to Tripoli. "He has always earnestly wished, for the good of Germany," Lord Ampthill wrote to Lord Granville at the end of 1881, "to establish a practical alliance with England like that which existed between France and England during the late Empire, but was never able to inspire the requisite confidence in London." The Mephistophelean laugh was, indeed, too plainly audible. "Prince Bismarck is in high spirits since the French have gone into the Tunis trap which he baited for them at the (Berlin) Congress, and chuckles over the security Germany will enjoy from a diminished army in France with increased occupation in Africa." In February, 1882, Count Herbert Bismarck

¹ Lord Fitzmaurice's *Granville*, II, 220.

came to London as Chargé d'Affaires, and fear of cordially received, much to his father's joy. The cellor complained, however, in a letter to "a high-placed personage,"¹ of "the absolute impossibility of confidential intercourse in consequence of the indiscretion of English statesmen in their communications to Parliament, and the absence of security in alliances, for which the Crown is not responsible in England, but only the fleeting Cabinets of the day." British Blue-books were a peculiar terror to him, a fact that will hardly be understood in the Whitehall of to-day.² In 1883, he had concluded his truce with the Vatican, and was beginning to feel the pressure of the rising Colonial party. No colonies, no fleets, had hitherto been his acting principle. "Colonies, in his opinion, would only be a cause of weakness, because they could only be defended by powerful fleets, and Germany's geographical position did not necessitate her development into a first-class maritime power. . . . Many colonies had been offered him. He had rejected them, and wished only for coaling stations acquired by treaty from other nations."³ Now, with the elections of 1884 in view, and the newly protected industries crying out for fresh markets, the short spell of good relations with England was interrupted by the pressing of claims in Fiji, sudden annexations of territory in West Africa, and the hoisting

¹ Lord Fitzmaurice's *Granville*, II, 274.

² "It is astonishing how cordially Bismarck *hates* our Blue Books. . . I cannot sufficiently recommend to you to abstain from publishing any of my despatches about Bismarck in the Blue Books, for if once he takes offence at anything we publish he will take his revenge by making himself as disagreeable as possible to us for the rest of his days." Lord Ampthill to Lord Granville, July 15, 1882. *Life of Granville*, II, 367.

³ Lord Odo Russell to Lord Granville, February 11, 1873. *Fitzmaurice*, II, 337.

of the German flag at Angra Pequena. This last episode involved tedious negotiations between London and the Cape Government, and threatened to produce a serious breach. Bismarck pretended not to understand the need of considering colonial opinion, and charged the British Government with using the delay to forestall German action. At the same time he suggested that Heligoland (necessary to cover the projected Kiel Canal) should be ceded to Germany, and hinted that friendly action in Egypt could not be continued without compensation. Lord Granville, therefore, gave way; and the West African coast from 26° south to the Portuguese border, except Walfisch Bay, became German territory. By 1886 the Empire also possessed the Marshall Islands, New Guinea, Togo, the Cameroons, and a footing in East Africa. "It is a remarkable fact," the British Ambassador, Lord Ampthill, wrote to the Foreign Secretary, "that Prince Bismarck, contrary to his convictions and his will, has been driven by public opinion into the inauguration of the colonial policy he had hitherto denounced as detrimental to the concentration of German strength and power."

The coincidence of a reactionary turn in Germany and a progressive turn in British domestic policy was unfortunate. "The progress of democracy in England," Lord Ampthill wrote to Lord Granville in August, 1884, "is a cause of very serious alarm to the Sovereigns and Governments; and they purpose to meet it by consolidating the Monarchical League."¹ The Ambassador had, perhaps, been

¹ On March 16, 1884, Busch notes that Bismarck "had drawn up a memorandum for the Emperor showing that the home policy of Gladstone, the extension of the franchise, must lower the position of the English aristocracy, and with it that of the

speaking to the Emperor William, who, no doubt sincerely, believed that Bismarck was anxious about the monarchical principle when he brought the three Kaisers together at Skiernevitze in September, 1884. The history of the secret treaty then hatched is still imperfectly known; but it certainly had a more complex origin than that. Bismarck was, it is true, peculiarly susceptible at the moment to party considerations. Lord Ampthill died a few days after sending the message just quoted. His obvious successor in the Berlin Embassy was Sir Robert Morier; but the Chancellor would have none of the Liberal friend of the Crown Prince Frederick and the Progressives. The main motive was larger. There had been an attempt to improve British relations with Russia, and fear of a Franco-Russian combination, with Austria possibly joining, was permanent in the Wilhelmstrasse. A policy of pinpricks kept England's eyes upon distant fields, though it brought no other profit. Difficulties were raised in Egypt, and new causes of dispute were found in Africa, with no better result than to force

Crown. This from the man who had set up universal suffrage in Germany thirteen years before! The memorandum may have been inspired by the Chancellor's antipathy to the Crown Prince and his English relatives. On November 2, 1884, speaking to Prince Hohenlohe (*Memoirs*, II, 310), the Emperor William I spoke with disquiet of England. "He is afraid that the Republican movement may gain the upper hand in England. 'We shall have difficulty in retaining our position.' It was consequently necessary that at any rate the three Imperial Powers should unite to defend the monarchical principle. That was also the main reason for the meeting at Skiernevitze. Prince Wilhelm had exerted a very good influence over the Emperor of Russia (Alexander III). The Emperor William and Bismarck had given the Prince instructions to advocate the union of the three Imperial Powers, and he had accomplished this very creditably." This marks the first appearance of the present Kaiser in high politics.

the British Government to occupy St. Lucia Bay, to take measures ultimately leading to the foundation of British East Africa, and to prevent the western extension of the Transvaal Republic. New Guinea, Samoa, and Togo, also, became occasions for the display of Bismarckian dexterity¹ at the very time when a new Berlin Conference was formulating, in the Act of February 24, 1885, a charter of personal, commercial, and religious freedom for the Congo basin.

Bismarck had regarded the alliance with Austria only as an unavoidable "choice between two friends." He hastened, therefore, to seize the opportunity of the conflict between Russia and England with regard to the Afghan border to conclude the secret "re-insurance" compact of September, 1884, between Germany, Russia, and Austria, which pledged the parties to benevolent neutrality in case either of them should be attacked. This arrangement, revealed only in 1896 by Bismarck himself, through his organ the *Hamburger Nachrichten*, was, doubtless, thought by its author to be a miracle of diplomatic cunning, for did it not bind Russia to the interests of two Powers already allied against her? But the Tsar's servants are past-masters in this low branch of political art. The arrangement was renewed in 1887 by Russia and Germany only, but lapsed in 1890—as Bismarck suggested, owing to British influence. Certainly, it was at that time that the Salisbury Ministry ceded Heligoland to Germany, in return for the suzerainty of Zanzibar. A more substantial reason, however, lay in the fact that St. Petersburg was preparing for the French Alliance, with which, of course, the treaty of 1884 was incompatible. This, meanwhile, gave Russia a free hand

¹ *Life of Granville*, II, 373-4.

in Central Asia ; and war after the Penjdeh collision was narrowly averted. England was also deeply involved in the Soudan, in disputes with France with regard to Egypt and Siam, and in the first Home Rule crisis. Bismarck, who had become more irascible and arrogant of late, took advantage of the emergency to indulge in a fierce attack upon the British Foreign Office (in the Reichstag, March 2, 1885). One of several charges of bad faith referred to a despatch to which, he declared, he could get no reply. Lord Granville protested that he had never received it ; and Count Münster discovered that, by the Chancellor's own order, it had not been delivered. Lord Fitzmaurice describes this incident as suggesting an ominous analogy to that of the Ems telegram. "As to Bismarck," said Mr. Gladstone, à propos of Egypt, "it is a case of sheer audacity, of which he has an unbounded stock."¹ The fall of the Ferry Ministry eased the situation for the British Foreign Office ; concessions were made to Germany in New Guinea and the neighbouring islands ; and the Egyptian financial question was settled. At the same time the Boulanger agitation, a series of frontier incidents, and a growing estrangement from Russia gave the Berlin officials full occupation. Such was the position when, by a combination of circumstances the most dramatically significant in modern history, the Chancellor himself was ruined, and his years of labor brought to nothing.

In 1888, Germany lost two Emperors, and the first Russian loan was placed on the French market. In March, 1890, Bismarck was dismissed ; and on August 22, 1891, after the visit of a French fleet to Cronstadt, the Franco-Russian Alliance was consum-

¹ Morley's *Gladstone*, II, 270.

mated, to be supplemented by a military convention in the following year. From that day to this, the rival forces have been arranged against each other on an ever-increasing scale of cost. Italy, whom Bismarck in 1880 compared to a carrion crow on a battlefield, is dragged more and more reluctantly in the wake of her greater partners. Still less does the bond of the Muscovite tyranny with the Parisian money-lenders represent any healthy political gravitation. The measure of the recovery of France is the measure of Bismarck's failure. But the sins of the fathers are visited upon the children, even to the third and fourth generation. "You will permit me, Prince Bismarck," said his dupe, Benedetti, "to point out to you that your policy has placed Europe under the necessity of arming—of arming incessantly and beyond measure; and that the nations live in terror of immense, frightful catastrophes which some fortuitous event may suddenly cause to explode, notwithstanding the prudence of the various Governments. To maintain this sad state of affairs, the people stagger beneath a burden of taxation which is out of all proportion to the economic resources of each country." The Tsar Nicholas II used still stronger phrases in summoning the First Hague Conference: "Hundreds of millions are devoted to acquiring terrible engines of destruction which, though to-day regarded as the last word of science, are destined to-morrow to lose all value in consequence of some fresh discovery in the same field. National culture, economic progress, and the production of wealth are paralyzed or checked in their development. Moreover, in proportion as the armaments of each Power increase, so do they less and less fulfil the object which the Governments have set before themselves. The economic crises

due in great part to the system of armaments *à outrance*, and the continual danger which lies in this massing of war material, are transforming the armed peace of our days into a crushing burden. It appears evident, then, that if this state of things were prolonged it would inevitably lead to the very cataclysm which it is desired to avert, and the horrors of which make every thinking being shudder in advance., To put an end to these incessant armaments, and to seek the means of warding off the calamities which are threatening the whole world : such is the supreme duty which is to day imposed on all States." ¹

It fell to the German military delegate to the Conference, when the proposal for a truce was discussed, to deliver the formal reply of his Government which destroyed the proposal. "He did not think," he said, "that all the nations were crushed under the burden of armaments. In Germany the people were not bowed down by taxation ; they were not on the edge of an abyss ; they were not rushing to ruin. On the contrary, wealth, contentedness, and the standard of life were never higher. He maintained that personal service was not a burden, but a patriotic duty, and that to it Germany owed, first her existence, and next her security and prosperity . . . He objected strongly to the substitution of an international for a national duty, and entered into details to show how the proposals were inconsistent with the internal arrangements of Germany, and consequently unacceptable." This, briefly, is the Prussian official theory—that universal military service is a good in itself, an obedience to which for all time, so far as can be foreseen,

¹ Rescript of August 24, 1898. The Conference met in the following summer.

the citizen should gladly submit himself, not simply a burdensome necessity. The theory deceives none but a few pedants. Four million Socialist voters, who have themselves gone through their term of army service (reduced to two years by Caprivi in 1893), loathe militarism as the great obstacle at once to democracy and peace; and hundreds of thousands of good Germans have emigrated to escape the drill-sergeant. Here, as in the neighbouring lands, all working men recognize the bondage of the barracks and the competition in armaments to be unmitigated evils, though many think them incurable, at least in the present day.

The iron has, indeed, entered deeply into the soul of the nation. Patience, already an ingrained trait, has been fortified by the Marxian teaching. There is here none of the *esprit* of the French, or the spasmodic daring of the Russian *intelligenza*. A thousand elements of disunity have to be overcome—differences descending from far away tribal times, from the feuds of the old Church, the old Empire, and the old nobles; particularisms of prosperous cities, and dead-weight of the servile countryside; weaknesses that can be traced to the long agony of warfare and social disruption following upon the complex changes in the dawn of the modern era; discouragements of the reaction under Metternich; deceptions and penalties of Bismarck's regimen of force and craft. Out of this pathetic story at length emerge two results, a negative and a positive. Bismarck gave modern Germany a superficial uniformity, not a spiritual unity—that has yet to be achieved. Meanwhile, there is no State in Europe, except Russia and Austria-Hungary, that is so deeply divided; and in none do internal antagonisms present a graver prospect of future trouble. Militarism,

Agrarianism, Protectionism, Catholicism, Anti-Semitism, Socialism—these six words indicate an array of warring doctrines and interests that go far to stultify the seeming majesty of the Bismarckian Empire. There is enough of natural variety in German life, the product of environment and history, without these organized antagonisms. Except the Social Democratic movement, they differ widely from those healthy divisions of opinion, as in England, France, and the United States, which rest upon a prior acceptance of the fundamentals of freedom. They combine the viciousness of the doctrinaire with the greed of the trust magnate. They all have something in them subversive and immoderate; and it is difficult to foresee for a political life in which these are the major constituents a peaceful evolution.

But there is a positive and more promising result. Many signs show that the mind and spirit of this people have not been destroyed. They have been put through a painful but necessary discipline. After centuries of division and servitude, they are learning the taste of liberty. We have seen how unequal was the philosophy of the eighteenth to the intellectual tasks of the nineteenth century. All systems of thought must meet the test of social utility if they are to live. The metaphysicians who so skilfully reduced reality to a phantasmagoria of thought-appearances at length knocked their heads against the wall of hard facts, and woke from the dream of disposing of ancient faith or ancient inertia by dexterous argumentation. Nowhere was the swing of the pendulum from mediæval realism to eighteenth century idealism, and back again to realism in the nineteenth century, so violent as in Germany. In England, with its equable evolution, in which both qualities of

thought are commonly balanced, it is an almost incomprehensible spectacle. At last, the philosophers learned history, discovered the "will to live," and, after much buffeting, chose the service of the Superman, Bismarck, or of the new manufacturers, or of the old Church, or proclaimed a determinist Socialism and the class war. Thus we reduce our six political quantities to four great and opposed expressions of the realism of the age of steam and electricity—Bismarckism, Capitalism, Clericalism, and Socialism. The figure of the Iron Chancellor dominates the whole process by which the German mind has swung round from an idealistic to a realistic conception of life, in part by his personal power, more because it was exercised in the sphere not of thought but of action, where the final test of truth must always be sought.

The whole people, not the thinkers only, had to be forced through this transformation of character. This was Bismarck's task. We shall make a great mistake if we think of him simply as an incarnation of evil. Great personalities, institutions, and movements grow and maintain themselves not by the evil, but by something in them that is socially necessary. Bismarck had great virtues. Friedrichsruhe and Varzin offered to the Courts and governing classes of Europe an example of regard for the whole code of domestic morals. The Chancellor was personally disinterested; there is no reason to doubt his devotion to the interests of his country; and much of his extraordinary energy was given to work of unquestionable value. In his simple piety—he talked often of the "grace of God," carried a book of Scripture readings about with him, and was properly eulogized by the priests of all faiths when he died—there was no intolerance. But these are small matters beside his sheer

strength, fearlessness, breadth of outlook, promptitude and variety of resource. These qualities give us the clue to his historic rôle. It was, by opposition, to excite in the German people the political virtues they had hitherto lacked, by persecution to create a political "will to live," by exhibiting the stark nakedness of realistic statecraft to provoke a revolt toward a sounder idealism than the old. This is his title to fame; in this sense and this only was he one of the chief founders of the national unity of to-morrow.

CHAPTER VIII

WILLIAM II. BY RIGHT DIVINE

I. FREDERICK, A TRAGEDY IN THREE ACTS

THERE are times when, as we peer down the perspective of history, a particular group of events suddenly seem to separate themselves from the vague background of infertile fact, to stand out stereoscopically, and to re-enact themselves with all the purposefulness of a stage-play, so that a period hitherto obscure takes consistency and meaning in our mind. Such moments are the student's exceeding great reward. It is for them that he lives and works; for history, too, is born, not manufactured, and in this sphere science should never be more than the servant of art. In that rare moment of the re-creative imagination, when the dry bones of mere incidence are seen to be shaken as by a faint wind, then to fall together, and finally to clothe themselves in the semblance of living humanity, yearning toward us, their children, their creators, and their judges, for that moment we have held Prospero's wand. The present may escape us; but the past is inalienably ours, clamorous to live again in our better understanding.

So, when the one surviving principal in the events which shamed and shook the Court of Berlin between 1888 and 1891 has passed away, it may fall to some in-

spired pen to throw into dramatic shape this story of love, hatred, and ambition, of the clash of right and might, of high endeavour wrecked upon the reefs that bound our mortality, of lust of power rising to satanic heights, and falling never to rise again. A tragedy in three acts, perhaps, if the courage to take such themes as Shakespeare took be not extinct ; at least it would serve to remind us that these royal personages are of our own flesh and blood, subject to like passions and follies, like affections, and like penalties as ourselves. The first act of our supposititious drama might centre in the death of the Emperor William I, and the accession of Frederick "the Noble" ; the second would show the deepening misery of the ninety-nine days reign, and its terrible end, with the sinister face of Bismarck behind the prostrate figure of the Empress ; the third act, the abrupt rise of William II, and the downfall of the Iron Chancellor and the son on whom he had built all his hopes. The play would cover a period of two years. There would be comings and goings of doctors, Ministers, Ambassadors, Generals, royal relatives from England, Court satellites ; and, in the background, representatives of a suffering nation—Social Democrats, Clericals, Conservatives of various shades, sullen watchers from the conquered provinces, Southerners meeting Northerners in a desperate effort at amiability. The leading *dramatis personae* have been named ; we have followed the elder of them to this point ; two figures remain to be placed in our narrative—the Empress Frederick and her son, the present Emperor.

When, in January 1858, the Crown Prince of Prussia brought from England as his bride Victoria Adelaide, the Princess Royal, although she was then but a girl of

eighteen hopes were built upon the match which, in the nature of the case, could not be put into words by those who conceived them.¹ A charming, intelligent, and resolute woman, the darling of the Court of Queen Victoria and the Prince Consort, hailed by Mr. Cobden as "England's daughter," her bright spirit, imbued with British liberal traditions, was plunged without notice into the darkest period of Prussian reaction. "Berlin," said Sir Robert Morier, "is a dismal, flat, sandy, with-many-evil-smells-abounding capital. . . . The monotony and humdrum of our existence here seem to daily deepen into a Dutch mud canal of a life, without even the tulip beds on the banks." Maximilian Harden paints a still gloomier picture: "a narrow, dirty river, narrow streets with open gutters, rarely a green spot within the municipality; small shopkeepers who timidly lower their gaze at the sight of any military uniform; and an idolatry unknown to the Briton of priests and even custodians of State, of the whole swarm of right honourable officialdom. Princess Victoria must have felt like a harbinger of culture in a country of savages." For a short time she was, in fact, cordially welcomed in that capacity. England still stood before the peoples of the Continent as the model of progress and the proof of its success. Every Liberal in Germany looked for an Anglo-Prussian alliance as an aid to the peaceful achievement of national

¹ There had been a characteristic outburst on the part of Queen Victoria, recorded in her *Letters*, III, 253 (to the Earl of Clarendon): "The assumption of its being *too much* for a Prince Royal of Prussia to *come over* to marry the *Princess Royal of Great Britain* in England is *too absurd*, to say the least. . . . Whatever may be the usual practice of Prussian Princes, it is not *every* day that one marries the eldest daughter of the Queen of England. The question, therefore, must be considered as settled and closed."

union and freedom. Prince Frederick and his wife, with their relations in some of the smaller Courts, became the chief hope and support of this Liberal movement. How poor were the resources on which it could draw we have seen ; it was doomed when King William, in 1861, staked his new crown upon his military plans. " Her Royal Highness," Lord Clarendon wrote to Queen Victoria from Berlin in November of that year, " is much alarmed at the state of things here, and Lord Clarendon thinks with great reason, for the King has quite made up his mind as to the course he will pursue. He sees democracy and revolution in every symptom of opposition to his will. He will never, if he can avoid it, accept the consequences of representative government, or allow it to be a reality." ¹ A year later, Bismarck was in power, and his life-long feud with the Crown Prince and Princess had begun.

Step by portentous step, from Düppel to Königgrätz, and thence to Sedan, the nation waxed in pride and confidence in its new master. Where once poets sang and philosophers taught, there was now heard only echoes of the war-songs of victorious legions. A word from London, it was said, and Napoleon III would not have dared to fight. Instead, Newcastle sent coals to France in her extremity ; Manchester, blankets ; Birmingham, small-arms. Men forgot that Princess Victoria was the daughter of a German Prince, they remembered that she called herself " Vicky," and her eldest son " William," that she wore English clothes, and drank English tea. Henceforth she was the " Engländerin," suspect of designs to re-furnish, if not to re-build, the Empire in English style. The memory of British subsidies in the eigh-

¹ *Letters of Queen Victoria*, III, 465.

teenth century and of Blücher's relation to Wellington rankled. Bismarck, with his staff of tame editors, publicly traced every feeble protest of the Crown Prince against his own arbitrary proceedings directly to his foreign wife, indirectly to a desire of British statesmen to draw Germany out of Russia's orbit into their own. The scholars Helmholtz, Virchow, Dubois, and many others who were drawn to the princely household, still more the Bunsens, Geffcken, Stockmar, and the Liberal Parliamentary leaders, were marked down and spied upon as actual or potential traitors. Not a British diplomatic representative of the time escaped Bismarck's slanderous pen. The Empress Augusta, an amiable and open-minded woman, was attacked in the press as a victim of the same malign influence. However Wagner may have commended the legendary Brunnhilde on the stage, there was no room for a stateswoman in the scheme of the new German Empire or the temper of mind that came with it. Asked one day why he did not defend the good name of the Crown Princess, Bismarck replied: "I was sorry for the poor woman; but a gentlewoman who dabbles in politics herself forgets her gentlewoman's rights." Long years passed in this pitiful feud. The Princess endeavoured to engage her daughter (now Princess Victoria of Schaumburg-Lippe) to Prince Alexander of Bulgaria. The Chancellor opposed the match on the ground that Russia would be offended. She seemed to gain a single point toward the end when, on the accession of Frederick III, Puttkamer was dismissed. For the rest, her wide and active mind had to content itself with works of charity, the encouragement of education and archaeology, industrial art, and the influence of her salon.

Where should a widowed mother look for help? When

the final crisis came, her eldest son was thirty years of age. Born on January 27, 1859, tutored by the humane Dr. Hinzpeter from his seventh to his fourteenth year, he and his brother Henry had then been sent to the grammar school at Cassel, where they did their Homer and Livy, arithmetic and history, along with the commonality of pupils. In 1877 Prince William began to take courses at Bonn University—in the first term, Roman law, history of philosophy, experimental physics, and nineteenth-century history; in the second, history of German public law, political economy, history of ancient art, and German literary history; in the third, penal law, science of finance, history of art, history of the Reformation; finally, public and international law, chemistry, and Prussian administrative law. He was a bright, vigorous lad; an injury to his left arm sustained at birth did not prevent him from becoming a good rider and a good shot. In versatility and energy of will he was to prove worthy of his mother; so far there were no other traces of the English blood. The influence of environment, in these early days of the Empire, counted with heredity in the result: a true, but unusually intelligent, Hohenzollern. In February 1881, the two families having first been formally reconciled, he married Princess Augusta Victoria of Schleswig-Holstein-Sonderburg-Augustenburg. Of their children, the Crown Prince Friedrich Wilhelm was born in May 1882, Wilhelm Eitel Friedrich in July 1883, Adalbert in July 1884, August Wilhelm in January 1887, Oscar in July 1888, Joachim in December 1890, and Princess Viktoria Luise in September 1892. Living at Potsdam, with a not very royal purse, the young couple drifted more and more apart from the Crown Prince's liberal circle, and into the

influence of extreme partisans of Bismarck, like the Waldersees. Prince William did not conceal his lack of sympathy for the politics of his father and mother, or his admiration for the old Emperor, and the Chancellor. We have seen him first engaged in duties of State in 1884. When his father's illness passed the possibility of concealment, in May 1887, he entered upon more regular work at the Foreign Office, where he became very friendly with Count Herbert Bismarck.

To add to the Crown Prince's other woes, an international medical conflict waged over him. Bergmann had diagnosed cancer in the throat; Sir Morell Mackenzie disputed this, and advised against an immediate operation. On July 6, 1887, Prince Hohenlohe notes: "Mackenzie seems to have been right. The doctors in Berlin wished to operate. At the last moment Mackenzie came, at the wish of the Berlin physicians, and prevented the operation. Bismarck had been to the Emperor, and opposed the operation. Want of sympathy was apparent in the old gentleman and the Court—viz. those about him. Prince Wilhelm wished to represent him in London [at Queen Victoria's Jubilee], and was much put out, as the Crown Prince is going himself. There are people who have a preference for Prince Wilhelm as successor, and probably encourage him." The next winter the Crown Prince had to spend at San Remo, where, in January 1888, the operation of tracheotomy was performed. Prince William was now taking an active part in State affairs. The atmosphere of intrigue constantly thickened. "There are signs," says Prince Hohenlohe, on March 7, "that, when Prince Wilhelm becomes Emperor, he will not be able to live in permanent agreement with Bismarck. It seems that Conservative influences

opposed to Bismarck will become operative. The Prince is, in any case, not popular in Germany, and will have to be very careful to turn public opinion in his favour." Two days later, the Emperor William I expired, in his ninetieth year, asking the Chancellor on his deathbed to keep friends with Russia, and to stay to serve his grandson as well as his son.

Already doomed, Frederick III at once journeyed to Berlin, and entered bravely upon his short reign. Queen Victoria travelled to Berlin in May—evidently a visit of farewell. "When the Emperor got up and went to the stove to cough, the Empress asked me," says Hohenlohe, "'Don't you think he is looking pretty well?' I was able to reply in the affirmative. When I took my leave and expressed my sincere wishes for his recovery, the Emperor placed his hand on my shoulder, and smiled sadly, so that I could hardly restrain my tears. He gave me the impression of a martyr; and, indeed, no martyrdom in the world is comparable with this slow death. Every one who comes near him is full of admiration for his courageous and quiet resignation to a fate which is inevitable, and which he fully realizes." Every one? On June 15, the martyrdom was ended. Within an hour of his father's death, the Schloss Friedrichskron at Potsdam was surrounded by troops by Prince William's orders, and every one within kept prisoner, while the heir secured the dead sovereign's papers. A week later, Hohenlohe called upon the Empress Frederick. "She could not speak, at first, for crying. We spoke of the last days of the Emperor; then she roused herself and spoke of the wickedness and meanness of men, hinting at certain personalities. People wanted to obscure the Emperor's memory, and said now that he had not really been capable

of ruling, and had done nothing, whereas he had strenuously toiled, and formed independent conclusions. Herbert Bismarck had had the effrontery to say to the Prince of Wales [afterwards King Edward VII] that an Emperor who could not talk was not fit to reign. The Prince had said that, had he not valued the good relations between England and Germany, he would have thrown him out of the room. . . . I then went to the Prince of Wales, who spoke very guardedly, but was exceedingly angered at the boorishness of the Bismarck family, father and son.”¹

Hitherto, when things went wrong, Bismarck had fallen ill, retired to Varzin, and sent in a threat of resignation. He knew that this simple treatment would not serve with the young master of whom, years before, in 1882, he had said: “He wishes to take the Government into his own hands; he is energetic and determined, not at all disposed to put up with parliamentary co-regents, a regular Guardsman. Perhaps he may one day develop into the *rocher de bronze* of which we stand in need.”² For himself, he would have gladly retired. But there was another—“Absalom, my son Absalom.” “Bismarck thinks before everything of planting his son firmly in the saddle. To this end he constantly works and schemes,” observes Prince Hohenlohe. Thus Count Herbert had become Privy Councillor and Secretary of State; had passed from the Legation at Dresden to the Embassies of Rome and London; after a term as Minister at the Hague, had become Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs; and as Secretary of the Imperial Chancellory had been entrusted with various important negotiations.

¹ *Memoirs of Prince Hohenlohe*, II, 390,

² Busch, III, 56.

Men spoke jealously of the "Bismarck dynasty," and at length the present Kaiser echoed the phrase; but why not? Prince William seemed to be still most amenable, witness his birthday toast to the Chancellor, on April 6, 1888: "The Empire is like an army corps that has lost its commander-in-chief (i.e. William I) in the field, while the officer who stands next to him in rank (Frederick III) lies severely wounded. At this critical moment forty-six million loyal German hearts turn with solicitude and hope towards the standard and the standard bearer in whom all their expectations are centred. The standard-bearer is our illustrious Prince, our great Chancellor. Let him lead us. We will follow him. Long may he live!" These words evidently encouraged Bismarck, for we see him coaching Busch for extensive press attacks upon "die Engländerin" and Queen Victoria, who are regarded as "working in partnership" to embroil Germany with Russia.¹ According to Bucher, however, it was Queen Victoria who negatived the Battenberg marriage scheme, at the same time reconciling Prince William to his mother.

Within a month of the death of the Emperor Frederick, rumours were afloat that some of his papers were missing; and, in September, a portion of his diaries, relating to differences with Bismarck during the Franco-German war, was published by Dr. Geffcken, professor in the University of Strassburg, in the *Deutsche Rundschau*. The Chancellor, furious, pretended first that the publication was a forgery, then that it had been falsified by alteration. Geffcken was arrested, and, after several

¹ Busch having fulfilled his commission in the *Grenzboten*, Bismarck indignantly condemned the "slandorous" article in the *Boersen Zeitung*!

weeks' imprisonment, during which every effort was made to construct a case, was tried by the Imperial Court of Justice, and acquitted. A few days later, in conversation with Prince Hohenlohe, the Chancellor "launched out into lengthy references to the Geffcken affair, considered that the matter ought not to be allowed to rest, and mentioned various incidents to prove that the Emperor Frederick was by no means the liberal man that the Progressive party wanted to make him out. This legend was dangerous for the whole dynasty, and must be destroyed. He (Bismarck) has evidently got his teeth into the matter, and will not let go. I was forcibly reminded of an article 'Le Mort,' in the *Figaro*. He gave me the impression of a man not quite sound mentally. Irritation is increasing in all classes, and Prince Bismarck is harming himself more than the dead Emperor. . . . The Grand Duke of Baden opined that it was not unlikely that the Emperor would part with Bismarck if he noticed that all was not told him. For the present the Emperor wants to avoid all unpleasantness, since he needs Bismarck for the passing of the Army Bill." ¹

The young Kaiser now stood before the nation, a somewhat startling variation upon the familiar Hohenzollern type. His challenging eye, full lips, and *retroussée* moustache, his imperious air and impatient movements, a hundred little signs of a bold will and an intelligence rare to this royal house, gave emphasis to a series of proclamations and speeches in which he asserted unmistakably his divine right to reign in fact as well as in name. He had taken up this task "in presence of the King of Kings, and promised God to be a just and clement prince, to cultivate piety and the fear of God." The army and

¹ Hohenlohe: *Memoirs*, II, 399.

navy evidently had precedence in his affections ; but, in his first Throne speech, he declared that " there was no need for fresh military glory or new conquests." Woe to the foes of order ; but he would " continue the legislative work of his grandfather, particularly in the sense of the message of November 17, 1881, promising protection to the labouring population according to the principles of Christian morality." State occasions gave insufficient occasion for his somewhat florid eloquence ; toasts, improvised addresses to deputations, and to bodies of recruits, followed one another with a rapidity shocking to elder courtiers and politicians. A speech after the unveiling of a statue at Frankfurt contained a sentence that excited much sarcastic comment : " Germany would rather leave her eighteen army corps and forty-two million inhabitants on the field of battle than surrender a single stone of the territory won in 1870." There was something too mystical for the ordinary mind in the calculation that thus distinguished between " Germany " and the German people.

Bismarck, suspected of insanity himself, was a cool enough critic of others. But he was inclined to think that " time would correct this youthful vivacity. Better too much than too little fire." Meanwhile, " the talking Emperor " was becoming " the travelling Emperor." One journey after another took him to the leading Courts of Europe (and to some smaller ones : Athens was said to be temporarily ruined by the costs of hospitality), to the various cities of the Empire, and to the Northern seas. Men were puzzled by this restless movement. It was not always quite clear how far the new sovereign's opinions were momentary flashes of wit, or responses to the excitement of a particular occasion. To Prince

Hohenlohe, he "animadverted on the magistracy and Town Councillors of Berlin. He mentioned the Social Democratic elections to the town council, and said it would go on in Berlin till the Social Democrats had a majority. Then they would plunder the burgesses. This was a matter of indifference to him. He would have loopholes made in the Palace, and look on at the plundering. Then the citizens would beg him to help them" (Dec. 12, 1889). In Silesia, he summoned his subjects to "wake up from their sleep, and not leave to the State the duty of fighting the revolutionary elements." At the same time, he evidently desired to play the benevolent autocrat among the workmen: "my ears will always be open to just claims," he told a deputation of Rhenish miners. And on December 30, 1889, he addressed a rescript to the Chancellor: "May God preserve to me for many years your faithful and experienced counsels in my difficult part as sovereign."

On January 24, 1890, he laid before the Council of Ministers two imperial rescripts on the development of the insurance law and on factory legislation. Bismarck knew now that the day of reckoning had arrived. "It is not my nature to turn the left cheek to the smiter," he had once said; and, again, when some one quoted Goethe, "Blessed is he who retires without hatred from the world," "What!" he had replied, "without hatred? What a tailor's soul he must have!" The author of three wars and an Imperial Constitution, whatever his weaknesses might be, would "die game." He opposed the rescripts, strongly holding that they would encourage the Social Democrats, and offend the middle class and the manufacturers.¹ Finding all the Ministers against him, he

¹ The Emperor "related the whole story" to Prince Hohen-

suggested that the Emperor should, instead, summon an International Conference to consider the labour question. William II seemed to accept this proposal. Nevertheless, rescripts were published in the *Reichs-anzeiger* on February 4, linking the proposal for the insurance legislation with that of an international conference; and they appeared without the Chancellor's signature. A few days later, at the dinner of the Brandenburg provincial assembly, the King uttered these words of open menace: "I accept gladly the co-operation of all, but I shall crush any one who attempts to cross my purpose."

The Reichstag elections of February 20, and March 1, 1890, appeared to justify Bismarck's anticipations. The breach between the Conservatives and National Liberals had been widening for two years. The Kaiser had openly intervened to maintain the combination; but it had been impossible to construct a common programme for the elections. An increase of food prices due to the new protectionist duties robbed the Government of any credit for its new promises of labour legislation; on the other hand, these promises alienated the middle and upper classes. The Governmental parties were, in fact, reduced

lohe on April 26 (*Memoirs*, II, 414). This account contains the following passage: "The Chancellor desired to bring the Socialist law (rejected at the end of 1889), including the provisions of expulsion, before the new Reichstag once again, to dissolve the Reichstag if it rejected the law, and to take energetic measures in the event of a revolt. The Emperor objected to this policy, saying that, if his grandfather had been forced to deal with rebels after a long and glorious reign, no one would have thought the worse of him. But he was himself in a different position, for he had as yet achieved nothing. He would be reproached with beginning his reign by the slaughter of his subjects. He was ready enough to act, but he wished to be able to act with a clear conscience, and first to make an attempt to satisfy the legitimate grievances of the workmen,"

to little more than a half of their former strength. Bismarck at once proposed to throw over the National Liberals, and to make a new *bloc* of the Conservatives and the Centre. Lively as was the Kaiser's temperament, his nonagenarian Minister had the more agile mind. William objected to the sudden right-about-face ; and, learning that Bismarck was arranging for an interview with Windthorst, the Centre leader (March 14), concluded that he was being defied.

Divine right monarchy and the Prussian Constitution were now to be tested in single combat ; and, for the first and last time, the man who had so often used the Hohenzollern title for his own ends was to oppose it in the name of a constitutional principle. He had disputed the Emperor's right to act directly with his Ministerial colleagues, citing a decree of April 8, 1872, attributing to the Prime Minister alone the responsibility for official acts, and prescribing that no important measure should be adopted without prior submission to him. To this, the Emperor had replied by asking him to draft a new decree revoking that of 1852. When, on the afternoon of March 14, Herr von Lucanus came to ask him in future to inform the Emperor in advance when he proposed to have special conversation with deputies, Bismarck replied : " Be good enough to tell His Majesty that I do not recognize in any one the right to impose on me the choice of persons who shall cross my threshold." Next morning, the Kaiser himself called at 77, Wilhelmstrasse. Bismarck, who had not yet risen, quickly dressed himself, and prepared for the final encounter. What did his negotiations with Windthorst mean ? He had had no negotiation, but only a private conversation. Not even to the sovereign could he admit the right of regulating his relations with depu-

ties, or his personal hospitality. "The orders of my Emperor stop before the door of Princess Bismarck's rooms. Besides, it was only to keep a promise made to the Emperor William I that I have remained in the service of his grandson. If I am troublesome to your Majesty, I am ready to retire." With an affirmative gesture, the Kaiser marched off.

That evening the Chancellor summoned the faithful Busch to the Foreign Office, showed him a trunk and several boxes full of papers, and asked his help in getting them away, "for, if they remain here much longer, it will end in him (the Emperor) seizing them. . . . I now want to write my memoirs, and you can help me with them—that means I am going to retire. I cannot stand him any longer. . . . I cannot make genuflexions, nor crouch under the table like a dog. He wants to break with Russia; and yet he has not the courage to demand the increase of the army from the Liberals in the Reichstag. . . . I cannot tack on as a tail to my career the failures of arbitrary and inexperienced self-conceit for which I should be responsible." So, plans were made to get the papers away secretly (did they think of Arnim and Geffcken?), and to open a campaign against the Crown based on documents abstracted from the official files. Still hoping against hope that the end could be delayed, Bismarck set to work upon a memorandum on the decree of 1852. On March 17, the Emperor's *aide de camp*, General von Hahnke, called to say that his master awaited the Chancellor's resignation. Bismarck declined to resign, remarking that he could be dismissed at any moment, but "I cannot put an end to my political career by an act the consequences of which I consider fatal for the German people and Empire." The Kaiser thereupon sent Herr von

Lucanus to reiterate the demand, adding that he was astonished at the Chancellor's delay. The issue being unavoidable, Bismarck, on March 18, wrote a reasoned letter of resignation.¹

Dealing in the main with the Cabinet question, it describes the arrangements instituted in 1848 and 1852, by which the Minister-President became solely responsible for "unity and continuity in the Ministry of State itself and in the relations between the latter and the monarchy, without which Ministerial responsibility such as arises under a constitutional system would be an impossibility." Public opinion required this degree of responsibility. "If each individual Minister can receive commands from the Sovereign without previous arrangement with his colleagues, a coherent policy of the Cabinet for which some one is to be responsible is an impossibility. . . . Such a provision as that contained in the Order of 1852 could be dispensed with under the absolute monarchy, and could also be dispensed with to-day if we returned to absolutism without Ministerial responsibility. But, according to the constitutional arrangements now legally in force, the control of the Cabinet by a President under the Order of 1852 is indispensable." Bismarck boldly added that it would be even more indispensable for a Minister who did not possess his own experience and prestige. Only one other question was lightly mentioned in the letter, the difference of opinion with regard to Russia. Bismarck, ready to pay any price to stave off a Franco-Russian alliance, wished at this time to consent to a Russian occupation of Bulgaria, indifferent to the feelings of Austria. The Emperor, however, insisted on fidelity to his ally, and made it a complaint that his attention had not been

¹ Busch prints it in full, III, 362-7.

called sooner to "this terribly threatening danger," so that a friendly warning could be sent to Vienna.

Lucanus took from the hand of the Chancellor his letter of resignation, and handed to him an imperial note creating him Duke of Lauenburg, with an allowance to maintain this new honour. Bismarck declined both with angry contempt, remarking that a career like his was not to be ended with a gratuity. On the 20th, a holograph letter from the Emperor was delivered accepting the resignation "with a heavy heart," and referring to "your wise and effective policy of peace, which, from a firm conviction, I am determined to take for my future guidance." In a telegram two days later, the Kaiser referred to the change as "ordained by God ; so I have to bear it, even though I should sink under the load." "The duties of the officer on the bridge of the ship of State," he added, "have fallen on me. The course remains the same ; and now 'Full steam ahead !'" On the same evening, much to the annoyance of old Moltke, in a speech welcoming the then Prince George of Wales (now King George V), who had just been invested as Knight of the Order of the Black Eagle, the Emperor mentioned his nomination as a British Admiral, recalled the comradeship in arms at Waterloo, and expressed the hope that the British fleet and the German army would always co-operate for the maintenance of peace.

A week of packing—during which Count Herbert was relieved of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs—and Bismarck was ready to leave for the country. On the eve of his departure, he laid some roses on the mausoleum of the old Emperor at Charlottenburg, and then paid a farewell visit to the widowed Empress Frederick. Moved by a generous impulse, the woman whom he had slandered and

thwarted asked if she could not do something for him. That was a word to tighten the heart ; and we may allow ourselves to imagine the tall figure stiffening, in this supreme moment of humiliation, with the fatal pride that will not shed a tear, as he replied : " I ask only for your sympathy."

Broken as he had broken so many others, spied upon by the spies he had himself created, deserted by those who had been his servile partizans, he enjoyed a momentary illusion on the morrow, March 29, when, leaving Berlin for Friedrichsruhe, still brave in his white cuirassier's uniform, he shouted to the crowd which acclaimed him in the streets—" The Emperor will see me again." But, even at seventy-five, Bismarck was not the man long to deceive himself. He knew that his fall had been received with relief throughout the class which monopolizes political power in Prussia—" they have all swelled out like sponges put in water," says Hohenlohe—and with joy among the whole body of the organized working classes. Twenty years of disillusionment had gradually eclipsed the glory he brought from Versailles. The principle in defence of which he had appealed to the decree of 1852 was too faint of outline to interest anybody. If the decree was, as it appeared to have been throughout Bismarck's twenty-eight years of office, a mere bureaucratic bye-law, a provision to enable one Minister of the monarch to keep the other Ministers in order, let the bureaucracy see to it. Anything deserving, even for the people of Prussia, the name of a " constitutional principle " would have a much wider bearing, and would begin with a limitation of the power of the sovereign, in favour of—whom ? Of the Diet ? But the Diet had no say whatever in this dispute. Of the Chancellor himself, then ? Bismarck's

"constitutional principle" was seen to be merely the aggrandisement of the offices of Prime Minister and Chancellor. He had, in fact, shared the royal and imperial power, with no better right than the complaisance of the old King-Emperor. To maintain this privileged position, he had destroyed the popular movement for a broadening of constitutional rights, and any spirit of independence in the men who must now succeed him. The new ruler might be arbitrary and self-conceited; but, after enjoying so long the delegated power of divine right monarchy, Bismarck was disabled from saying what he felt of the absurdity of such a basis for a modern State. Might had ever been Right for him. To the law he had himself made he had at last to bow.

He lingered on in his exile for nine years, like a wounded lion, at first unable to stifle his cries of rage, then slowly relinquishing all hold upon a world of which he once said, in a letter to his wife: "Peoples and individuals, folly and wisdom, war and peace, all comes and goes like wave upon wave, and only the sea remains." In January, 1894, he was reconciled to the Kaiser, who, on his eightieth birthday in the following year, came in person to Friedrichsruhe and presented him with a sword, "symbol of the instrument Your Excellency helped to forge, and of that period of construction whose cement was made of blood and steel." Deputations came, went, and forgot. "They are burying me alive," the old man growled, and added, in Cromwell's words, "There would be many more to see me hung." On July 30, 1898, he died, while a storm beat upon the house and the neighbouring pine forest. There, in a little building of yellow stone, visited now only by an occasional pilgrim, lies the dust of him who hurled nation against nation, devoured thousands of

lives, poisoned political intercourse, and created that Armed Peace which has been better called the Armed Fear.

What follows in our story is but an interval of preparation for some great change not in sight which Bismarck made necessary. Nations are slow to learn the meaning of such a life and such a death. But the great sea of law remains beneath all passing waves of political accident ; and we who are at a sufficient distance to observe without prejudice may hold the faith that, in some scheme beyond our ken, the historical rôle of this extraordinary man is conciliable with what we call the poetic justice of his ending.

II. HOHENZOLLERN IDEALS

With lesser men came calmer days. When General von Caprivi succeeded to the Chancellorship, a relaxation throughout the political field was at once manifest. The tribe of Busch melted away into the nothingness where it properly belongs. Discussions in the Reichstag and the press became more free and calm when Caprivi showed himself ready, as he said, to accept " ideas obstructed by the too powerful personality of Bismarck." The Anti-Socialist law lapsed in 1890 ; and the Social Democratic party, openly re-organized, became, at the elections of 1893, by far the largest party in the Empire (1,786,000 votes ; the Conservatives came next with 1,038,000), although, owing to the gross inequality of constituencies, they secured only 44 seats. A series of low-tariff treaties stimulated consumption and manufacture. The lapse of the treaty with Russia brought with it a temporary truce with the Poles of the Eastern provinces. A progressive income-tax was established in Prussia ; and

the rural administration was reformed. The army was constantly enlarged ; but, in 1893, the period of service for the infantry was reduced from three to two years.

Before we consider some of the larger developments of the new reign, it will be of interest to attempt to obtain a clearer impression of its central personality. The Kaiser has made this task possible by the frequency, variety, and frankness of his public utterances. In twenty-four years, he has made hundreds of speeches upon all manner of subjects.¹ No modern monarch has spoken so much, and none has expressed himself on so many aspects of public life. A susceptible and impetuous spirit and a natural gift of eloquence, while they have betrayed him into many difficult and some dangerous situations, give abundant material for portraiture and judgment of one of the most striking and influential figures in contemporary affairs. This is a fundamental characteristic : it is impossible to imagine so voluble a monarch conspiring, as Bismarck conspired. Until recently, we should have said that he must speak or die. Generally, the sincerity of his utterance had been so obvious that it is difficult to imagine him concealing any important factor in the matter. We shall see that, with the passing of the years, he has grown. But a generous impulsiveness, a love of throwing ideas broadcast upon the four winds, an indomitable energy and heat of mind remain, constant traits. In private intercourse, he is credited with much *bonhomie*, and a charm resting on

¹ *Kaiserreden. Reden und Erlasse, Briefe und Telegramme Kaiser Wilhelms II.* A. O. Klaussmann.—*Guillaume II, Ce qu'il dit, ce qu'il pense*, by Jules Arren, is a well-arranged collection, from authentic reports, of speeches, letters, etc.—See also *Der Kaiser*, 1888–1909, by Dr. Paul Liman.—For several citations on subsequent pages I am indebted to the columns of *The Times*.

his cordial interest in any genuine accomplishment. Something of this alertness appears in all his public words and acts ; and, though it is not enough to place him in the ranks of the few great actors of history, it rescues him from the oblivion into which most of his ancestors have fallen, and most of his contemporaries are destined to fall. When we recall the early years in which the slut Rumour played with fears of hereditary ailments, and the caricaturist made merry over a Lohengrin in American garb, a kingly dreamer who transformed himself in a moment into the twentieth century commercial traveller, only a cold heart will fail to be glad that time has permitted this character to unfold itself to the fuller comprehension of his people and the world at large.

With all his modern traits, the deepest note of his nature appears to be his belief in the divine mission of the House of Hohenzollern. He accepts the Constitution, as it now stands, because it leaves room for the full play of an hereditary monarchy. "I am of opinion"—this on his accession—"that our Constitution establishes a just and useful partition of different public powers in the life of the State ; and for that reason also, and not only because of my oath, I will observe and defend it." But deeper far is the sense of the privilege and duty of his family "drawn from the consciousness that God has put it in the place it occupies, and that it must render account to Him alone and to its conscience of what it does for the good of the country."¹ "It is a tradition in our House," he had said directly after the fall of Bismarck, "to consider ourselves as designed by God to govern the peoples over which it is given us to reign." His grandfather, above all, incarnates this idea : "To all of

¹ Feb. 24, 1894, at the Brandenburg banquet.

us, and especially to us princes, He left a jewel that we must revere and hold as sacred—it is royalty by right divine, royalty with its onerous duties, its labour and fatigues which never end, its terrible responsibility before the Creator, of which no man, no Minister, no Parliament, no people can relieve the prince. Conscious of this responsibility, and feeling himself the instrument of the Lord, this great Emperor pursued his way full of humility.”¹ “William the Great,” as his grandson likes to call him, shares with the Great Elector the supreme honour as “instrument of the Lord.” The former accomplished what the latter conceived; both succeeded because they were mandatories of a higher master; and now, by that faith, “in me as in my ancestor, there is an inflexible will, and, despite all resistance, I shall continue always in the way I have once recognized to be good.”²

In the early years of the reign—years, as we have seen, of national disillusionment—this arrogant note was repeatedly heard,³ with a variation of pained surprise when the people for whom such sacrifices were made did not show themselves properly grateful. Thus, on his return from the foreign tour of 1888: “I cannot help mentioning one very sad impression that I bring home. While I was spending all my strength and health to assure to the Empire and its capital peace and prosperity,

¹ Aug. 31, 1897, at Coblenz.

² July 11, 1899. Letter to Dr. Hinzpeter.

³ In Dec., 1890, he sends his portrait to the Minister of Education with the words, “*Sic volo, sic jubeo.*” On May 4, 1891, at a Rhenish banquet, he says: “There is but one master in the country; it is I, and I will bear no other.” On Sept. 8, he writes in the *Golden Book* of the City of Munich: “*Suprema Lex Regis Voluntas.*” On Jan. 30, 1893, he inscribes a portrait with the words: “*Nemo me impune lacessit.*” On Sept. 22, 1894, he writes to the burgomaster of Thorn: “I can be very disagreeable, and I shall be if it should be necessary.”

by tightening the bonds of friendship with foreign sovereigns, the press of my capital has not ceased to discuss facts of the private life of my family in a manner that no private person would tolerate. I have been grievously hurt." This, indeed, was natural, as it was natural that he should resent the attacks of the few partizans of Bismarck. The sad thing was that, to the eyes of the youthful patriarch, there was on every hand a lack of the fine flower of loyalty. He wished his people to be a happy family, united in constant praise of the Hohenzollern dynasty and in pursuit of his own ideals. What he saw was disunity and disobedience, high and low. It was time to get rid of these "infantile ailments." The spirit of party was particularly obnoxious to him; and yet even the Prussian nobility, who should be lesser exemplars of the patriarchal virtues, fell into this error, and in their blindness dared to criticize their lord and master. "I have had the sorrow of remarking that, in the circles of the nobility which are near to me, my best intentions have been misconceived, and some of them combatted; I have even heard the word of opposition. Gentlemen, an opposition of the Prussian nobility against their King is a monstrosity; it can only justify itself when it has the King at its head—the history of our House teaches that. . . . Gentlemen, what you suffer I feel, also, for I am the largest landowner in the State, and I know very well that we are passing through a difficult time. Every day I think of ways of helping you. But you must help me, not by means of the Opposition parties that you have so often rightly combatted, but by explaining to your Sovereign, and having confidence in him. My door is always open to each of my subjects, and I gladly listen to them. Act so henceforth, and I shall

pass the sponge over all that has happened. . . . Forward, with God ; and shame to him, who abandons his King ! " (Sept. 6, 1894).

The Agrarian League, another stronghold of the aristocratic Conservatives, distressed him : " With the desire to help yourselves, and to make known to all classes the burden which weighs on agriculture, the members of your League allowed themselves last year to be led into an agitation by speech and writing which passed the limits of what is admissible, and profoundly wounded my heart as father of the people. But to-day, like my East Prussians, you have made me forget your fault " (Feb. 18, 1896). " The spirit of disobedience " is a synonym for misconception of the royal mission. It is fed by party politics. " Our present parties are founded on interests, and often defend them too much, each fighting for itself." Criticism of the Government is a leading sign of this naughty temperament. It makes many people think the country the worst governed in the world, which is absurd. " Would it, then, not be better for the grumblers and malcontents to shake the German dust off their shoes, and depart as soon as possible from a land whose situation is so miserable and lamentable ? " ¹ With an ever-full spring of monarchical tradition from which to refresh the mind and will, how can men be pessimists, *Schwartzseher* (men who see everything black) ? Life should be all joyful action. " We have a great future ; and I am leading you to glorious days." " What are the duties of youth ? To work, to avoid strife, hatred, discord, envy ; to rejoice in our German Fatherland as it is, not to dream of the impossible ; to live in the firm conviction that God would not have given Himself so

¹ Feb. 24, 1892, at the banquet of the Brandenburg Assembly.

much trouble with our Fatherland and people if He had not reserved great destinies for us. We are the salt of the earth ; but we must show ourselves worthy of our destiny. So our young people must learn to renounce what is not good for them, to defend themselves against what is borrowed from other peoples, and to cultivate good manners, discipline, order, respectfulness, and religion." ¹

It is possible to say that we should think less of the German people had they, with their rich heritage of religious and philosophical literature, been satisfied to accept these youthful sermonettes, and yet to appreciate certain sterling qualities of the mind that expressed itself so naively. There is no trace of Kant, Goethe, and their peers in this Prussian gentleman. But, after thirty years of Bismarck, any idealism, however simple, however romantic or mystical, so that it be sincere, is a relief. And we cannot doubt the sincerity of the Kaiser's religion. It is, moreover, very modern in its indifference to dogma. William II is the only great sovereign in the world whose faith is large enough to embrace both Protestantism and Catholicism ; and there was a time when he had enough left over, as it were, to support him in embracing the most powerful of Moslem rulers, also. "I expect you, laymen and churchmen"—assembled in the Town Hall of Aachen, on June 19, 1902—"to aid me in maintaining religion among the people ; we ought to work together in preserving to the Germanic race its healthy strength, its moral foundations. But that is possible only by religion, meaning thereby the two confessions equally. . . . Our two churches, living side by side,

¹ March 22, 1905, at Bremen.

must not lose sight of their great common aim, to maintain and fortify the fear of God and respect for religion. That we are modern men, acting in one sphere or another, matters nothing. He who has not religion for the foundation of his life is lost. I wish then, I also, as is fit in this day and in this place, not only to speak, but to promise. This is my vow: I place the entire Empire, the whole people, my army, represented here symbolically by my baton of command, myself, and my family at the foot of the Cross, and under the protection of Him of whom the great Apostle Peter said 'There is no other safety, and no other name given to men for their salvation,' and who Himself said, 'Heaven and earth shall pass away, but My words shall not pass away.' "

The Kaiser's youthful exuberance was often suspected of being a theatrical pose; this scene in the royal city of Charlemagne will suggest a truer idea. So intense a susceptibility to the appeal of a dramatic occasion must be sincere. So, too, of his visit to Palestine in 1898. He had always been attracted, supreme head of the Lutheran Church though he was, toward the Pope; he deplored the Kulturkampf, and only scolded the Centre as a political party just as he scolded Stöcker ("Political parsons are monsters. Let these gentlemen see to the souls of the faithful, and practise love of their neighbour; politics is no business of theirs"). He had gladly made peace with Leo XIII in 1888, appealed to the Pope for his support for the International Labour Conference in 1890, and in April 1893 paid a second visit to the Vatican. On October 26, 1898, he telegraphs from Jerusalem: "I am happy to be able to inform your Holiness that, thanks to the benevolent intervention of H.M. the Sultan, who has been kind enough to give me this proof of personal

friendship, I have been able to acquire at Jerusalem the ground called the Dormition of the Holy Virgin. I have decided to give this ground, sanctified by so many pious memories, to my Catholic subjects." Many learned men would have been able to compass this Protestant-Catholic-Moslem combination, if at all, only by a laborious intellectual process. The Kaiser had no such difficulty, because his impulses left him no time for reflection and self-criticism. In this instance, the act and the utterance had a pleasant air of kindly broad-mindedness. But a similar process of temperament often gave a quite opposite result.

There is, for example, the famous sermon read on board the royal yacht *Hohenzollern*, on July 29, 1900, when a German expeditionary force was being despatched to China to avenge the murder of the German Ambassador by the Boxers. The text is from Exodus xviii. 11: Joshua had gone out to fight the Amalekites, "And it came to pass, when Moses held up his hand, that Israel prevailed, and when he let down his hand Amalek prevailed." The Kaiser read a modern meaning into the ancient story—the holding up of hands is an act of prayer—and then proceeded to extract from it a moral savage enough for the most ancient Syrian chieftain. "Again the pagan Amalekites have risen in the East. By force and by stratagem, by murder and fire, they seek to bar out commerce and the European spirit, to prevent the triumphal entry of Christian customs and faith. And again God has commanded—'Choose men and go out, fight with Amalek.' A stern and bloody struggle has begun. . . . So, there, far away, the body of fighters, here the body of those who pray: it is the picture of today's battle." With the crude fervour of a street-corner

Salvationist, and a riot of rhetoric worthy of an American camp meeting, the royal preacher depicted the sufferings of the soldiers, on the voyage, on the march under burning sun and torrential rain, amid the storm of projectiles (in fact, however, the artillery was all on the Christian side). "More even than juvenile courage and inflamed enthusiasm, they need the benediction from on high. Without it they cannot gain or keep victory; Heaven opens only to prayer." So the Germany of Kant and Goethe is to go up into a mountain, and hold up its hands in prayer to God, "the great Ally," that Field Marshal Count von Waldersee may have a holy revenge upon the Chinese Amalekites!

In the midst of this wild appeal to the "God of armies and of battles," there is a moment of old-fashioned German sentimentality: "Over there in the Tauern, strange bells are hung on the summits of the mountains. No hand of man rings them. When the sun shines, they are silent and still. But when the storm wind comes, they begin to sway, to ring, and we hear their tinkling afar off down the valley. God has hung in the heart of every man the bell of prayer. In fine weather, in happy times, it may rest still and silent. But, when the storm of misfortune breaks, it begins to ring. Danger teaches us to pray. May the wind of war move in our hearts the bells of prayer." The China expedition duly fulfilled its task; and some valuable portions of the loot of Peking found a lodgment in the royal palace at Potsdam. We now know that the later result was not to commend Christianity to the "Amalekites," but to convert Confucianist China into a well-armed republic.

In scores of the Emperor's addresses, this rhetorical impulsiveness, this absence of self-criticism are illus-

trated. They show a mind flashing hither and thither, interested in a thousand things, but plumbing the depths of none, now attracted by some new fashion, then harking back to the oldest family traditions, unstable, inconsistent. In the Aachen speech from which we have quoted, he recognized one of the outstanding facts of olden German history. "What Charlemagne could do, thanks to his powerful personality, became impossible to his successors; and, in their desire to keep the empire of the world, the next imperial dynasties lost sight of the German people and lands. They went South to maintain the Empire, and forgot Germany. So our people and our land fell into decadence. Just as when the aloe flourishes all the strength of the plant is absorbed in the blossoming, and the eye of the observer is delighted by the growth of the flowers, while the plant is dying and the roots are drying up, so it happened to the Roman Empire borne by the German nation. The new Empire has another task; we have no longer to pass the frontiers of our country, but must strengthen ourselves at home to accomplish the mission that now falls to our people. . . . As is characteristic of the Germans, we limit ourselves abroad in order to obtain the utmost internal development. Our language constantly wins new domains beyond the sea. Our science and our discoveries extend far their flight. This is the world-empire that the Germanic spirit desires." In the mouth of the founder of the modern German war-fleet, the wielder of the "mailed fist" of the Hohenzollerns, this spasm of anti-imperialism, this praise of the empire of the spirit seem to the superficial observer very much like hypocrisy. Nothing could be more unjust. A truer as well as a simpler explanation lies in the restless vivacity of a character ambitious to

lead every side of the national life, extremely impressionable, and with no adequate control either of experience, judgment, or synthetic principle.

So, with traces of the wild piety of tribal times, and of the mediaeval-mystical religiosity of his nearer ancestors, there alternates a more individual view strongly smacking of the twentieth century. This is shown in the letter on the subject of Prof. Delitzsch's lecture "Babel and Bible."¹ The Kaiser has no more hesitation in offering his opinion on the delicate points raised than in planning a new monument or censoring an exhibition of realist art. "For me," he says, "there is not the least doubt that God manifests Himself uninterruptedly in the human kind that He has created . . . reveals Himself now in a great sage, now in a priest, now in a King, whether among the Jews, the pagans, or the Christians. Hammurabi was one such, like Moses, Abraham, Homer, Charlemagne, Luther, Shakespeare, Goethe, Kant, the Emperor William the Great; He has chosen them all, and has judged them worthy of His grace to guide their people, in the physical as in the moral domain, according to His will. How many times my grandfather declared himself to be only an instrument in the hands of God!" This is one kind of revelation; a second kind, "more religious," leads through the Prophets up to the appearance of Christ. "A good theologian like Delitzsch should remember that Luther taught us 'Do not tamper with the word of God.' Doubtless, the Old Testament includes a large number of chapters which are of a purely historical and human character, and not 'the revealed word of God.' I believe, for example, that the proclamation of the law on Sinai should not be considered as

¹ *Grenzboten*, Feb. 20, 1903.

inspired by God except in a symbolical sense. Moses revived legal texts known, perhaps, for a long time (possibly originating in the code of Hammurabi), in order to bind and consolidate the unity of his people. The historian may, from the sense of the words, discover relations with the laws of Hammurabi, the friend of Abraham ; but that would not disprove the fact that it was God who moved Moses to act thus, and that in this sense He revealed himself to the people of Israel. I conclude that, henceforth, our good Professor must avoid touching religion properly so-called ; but he can with easy mind study what borders on religion, the customs, etc., of the Babylonians, etc. My conclusions from this are—(a) I believe in one God ; (b) We human beings need a medium to make Him understood, especially to our children ; (c) This medium has hitherto been the Old Testament in its traditional form. This form will be sensibly modified by the newly discovered inscriptions. That does not matter. . . . The foundations remain ever the same—God and His work. Religion has never been a product of science ; it is an effusion of the heart and being of man in his relations with God.”

As the years passed, the Emperor became less concerned with any dogmatic basis of his theology, the Amalekites retired into the background, and the ethical exhortation took a gentler tone. “To unite all our citizens, all our States, there is,” he said, at Munster, on September 2, 1908, “only one means ; it is religion—~~not~~, indeed, in the rigorous sense of dogmatic theology, but in a larger, more vitally practical sense. I must recall my own experiences. During my long reign—it is twenty years since I came to power—I have found myself in touch with many people ; I have had to bear much ;

unconsciously, often, indeed, intentionally, they have made me suffer. And when, in such moments, anger threatened to carry me away, and the idea of reprisals rose in me, I asked myself what was the best way of dispelling anger and strengthening kindness. The only one I have found consisted in saying to myself: 'They are all men like yourself; and, while they have done you wrong, they have each a soul that comes from the serene regions above, to which we all hope some day to return, and, in their soul, they have in them a portion of their Creator'. . . In this spirit the old and new territories, burgesses, peasants, and workmen should meet and work together. Then our German people will be the granite block on which the good God may complete His work of civilizing the world. Then will be realized the word of the poet who said that the world will one day be cured by the German character."

To do justice to the Kaiser, we must constantly recall the peculiarities of his *milieu* and his public duty. Whatever may be thought of his religious views, at once so broad and so narrow, in themselves, the sympathy with both confessions which he has been able to maintain has been an influence of incalculable value in softening some of the most obstinate divisions among his people. Twelve days after his accession, he had promised to do his best to preserve religious peace. Eighteen years later, he narrated this incident in a speech addressed, particularly, to the Catholic Poles: "On my last visit to the Vatican, when Leo XIII was taking leave of ~~me~~ he took my two hands, and, although I am a Protestant, gave me his benediction, making me the following promise, 'I promise and swear to your Majesty, in the name of all the Catholics who are your subjects, of whatever

race and class, that they shall always be faithful subjects of the German Emperor and the King of Prussia.' " Well had the compact been kept. To have such a moderator, instead of a fierce combatant like Bismarck, means, in a land riven in twain by dogma, more than can be easily estimated. Occasions of offence must needs occur, but when they come there is a fund of tolerance, instead of irritation, to draw upon. So it happened in the summer of 1910, when the empire was thrown into angry controversy over certain passages in the Papal Encyclical *Editae Saepe*.

Mainly concerned with the Modernists, Leo X had incidentally denounced " that perversion of the faith and of manners which is called the Reformation and . . . under the name of evangelical liberty, a vicious corruption and a perversion of discipline such as the Middle Ages did not fall into." This was a particularly annoying incident, for anything which divided the Catholic Centrum from the evangelical Conservatives threatened to destroy the " blue-black block " on which the Government rested. Herr von Bethmann-Hollweg, as Prussian Minister-President, could not ignore the challenge, however ; and a protest was delivered at the Vatican. A tactful reply was given : the Pope had not intended to wound the susceptibilities of non-Catholic Germans or their princes. This assurance not being considered sufficient, an assembly of Cardinals was held in Rome, and Cardinal Merry del Val gave an undertaking that the Encyclical should not be read or published in the German dioceses. The difficulty would not have been surmounted so easily had there been any active ill-feeling between the Berlin Government and the Vatican. As it was, it exhibited divergencies within the Roman Church rather

than within the German nation. We have seen that there has always been a spice of independence in the Catholic Church in Germany. Modernist thought has not, perhaps, made great progress ; but, under pressure of industrial conditions, there has grown up a movement, especially strong in the Rhineland, in favour of co-operation with Protestants in trade union organization, in charitable work, and in administrative and political gatherings. This tendency, represented by the *Christliche Gewerkschaften*, or mixed trade unions, voiced by Dr. Julius Bachem in the *Kölnische Volkszeitung*, countenanced by some powerful teachers, and by Mgr. Ehrhard and Dr. Spahn in their historical works, had been for some time suspect among reactionary clericals, who feared to see the Centre converted from a doctrinal Catholic party into a body of social-economic politicians. Shortly before the issue of the Encyclical, there had appeared an anonymous pamphlet whose title told its story—"Cologne an inner danger for Catholicism" ; and there was ground to believe that the Pope had written under this kind of inspiration. Bismarck would have revelled in such a situation. Twenty years of denominational peace, however, had worked a great change. The Kaiser and his Ministers desired no quarrel ; on the other hand, Cardinal Fischer, Archbishop of Cologne, Cardinal Kopp, Prince-Bishop of Breslau, the Papal Nuncio at Munich, and some leaders of the Centre exerted their influence in Rome to procure the virtual suppression of a manifesto that Catholics and Protestants united in deploring. A new Kulturkampf was avoided ; Protestantism had been defended without any weakening of the loyalty of twenty million Catholic subjects.

For the rest, the Emperor's religious views call for no

discussion. They reveal a mind not unintelligent and not unamiable, morbidly anxious, indeed, to shine and to please, pathetically hopeful of figuring as a new Charlemagne, of reconciling all differences, and solving all the problems of our stressful time. Alas! "What Charlemagne could do, thanks to his powerful personality, is impossible to his successors." William II has claimed right divine; but a dim instinct tells him that, in the twentieth century, divine right belongs only to divine omniscience and divine beauty. So he tries to make himself beautiful in spirit, and encyclopaedic in knowledge. He must do his best even against possibility: the only alternative is to abdicate, and he is no coward. Who said that genius is merely an infinite capacity for taking pains? The father of his people, like a good doctor, must have a ready answer to every questioner, a prescription for every ailment. He "hustles around"—not quite as cheerfully and boisterously as Mr. Roosevelt, but with an occasional plaint as to the "enormous labour and crushing responsibility" of one in whose hands lie the destinies of sixty million souls. If he is evidently young for the rôle, and cannot look venerable, he must look fiercely energetic and of relentless will, overcoming a thousand difficulties as Frederick the Great overcame his enemies, by self-confidence and rapidity of movement.

If you cannot be supreme in one thing, be noticeable in many. The Empress Frederick exercised the modest talent of a mid-Victorian art amateur. In 1886, two years before her son came to the throne, a large picture signed "William of Prussia," showing a warship manoeuvring in a bay surrounded by snow-covered mountains, was hung in the Berlin Fine Arts Exhibition. A more

famous sketch is the result of collaboration with the painter Knackfuss—it represents St. Michael, sword in hand, with the nations arrayed behind him, slaying War before the Temple of Peace; another was that in which he exhibited the since-forgotten “Yellow Peril” to the eyes of Europe. The subjects of many pieces of statuary and sculpture have been suggested, and the designs roughed out, or the treatment modified, by the Kaiser, who dreams of Berlin being “some day, the most beautiful city in the world.” He is personally responsible for the *Sieges-Allee*, the Dolls’ Avenue as some irreverent Berliners call it, where the Hohenzollerns are glorified in white marble groups. For many years, until criticism became too clamorous, he interested himself actively in musical and theatrical productions, having a special penchant for gorgeous pseudo-historical ballets. He sees Germany, under himself, blossoming, like Italy under the Renaissance Princes, and France under the Grand Monarque, into a splendid primacy of artistic life. But, unlike those times, the art of to-day is to serve the moral ideal. “When I came to the throne ten years ago, I came from the school of idealism in which my father brought me up” (this is one of the very few tributes to his father¹). “I believed that the royal

¹ On January 25, 1902, unveiling at the Museum of Decorative Art in Berlin a window he had given representing his father and mother, the Emperor said: “From an ideal figure like that of my father, beside my dead mother, supported by the love of their people, the benediction of Heaven falls upon us. He was a splendid spirit; the dust of the road never touched the hem of his cloak. And there, too, is the image, so beautiful and pure, of my mother, a great-hearted woman all whose thoughts were so artistic, who wished that everything in life, however simple, might be suffused with beauty. An air of poetry surrounded her. You have before you their son and heir; and I consider it my duty to

theatre should serve above all to develop idealism in the people . . . should combat the materialism and the scandals that surround us, and that are so un-German.”¹

Prince and artists must co-operate to this end, as in the great ages of the past. “When I began this undertaking,² I thought I would try to show the world that the best way of executing a work of art is not to summon committees or to offer prizes, but, as in the good old times, in classic antiquity and in the Middle Ages, by direct communication between him who orders the work and the artist to guarantee a successful result. I believe that, from this point of view, we may contemplate the Avenue of Victory with satisfaction. Each of you has executed his task as he was able; and I feel that I have left you on this side the most entire liberty and leisure. I did not concern myself with details, but was content to give the direction and impulse. I feel full of pride and joy to-day in the thought that Berlin offers itself to the eyes of the world with a group of artists capable of executing so grandiose a work. That proves that Berlinesc sculpture has reached a degree of perfection that the Renaissance could scarcely surpass.” It is great by its denial of impressionism, realism, by its classical quality. It preaches a national gospel. “The ideal counts for us Germans among the national goods, while other peoples have more or less renounced it. There is now only the German people that is called to defend, above all things to cultivate and to develop, great ideas; and

Continue to extend my hand over my people, to encourage the cult of beauty, to develop art among them, but within the strict limits that popular sentiment and harmony lay down.”

¹ June 16, 1908, address to the actors of the two royal theatres.

² He is addressing the sculptors who executed the monuments of the Sieges-Allee, Dec. 8, 1901.

amid these noble tasks is that of giving the labouring classes the chance of enjoying the beauties of art, and so rising above the habitual round of thought. The cult of the ideal is the greatest work of civilization ; if we wish in this to be and to remain a model for other nations, it must reach the lowest classes, and that can only be done with the aid of art." Of sculpture best of all, because "sculpture has not yet been tainted by so-called modern tendencies and currents. It is still pure and beautiful. Keep it so, and do not let yourselves be led away by opinions or paradoxes to abandon the principles on which it rests, and to fall into disorder, exaggeration, and vanity."

The Emperor deluded himself into the belief that the Sieges-Allee had made a "colossal" impression on foreign opinion. Actually, it affected foreign and native observers in the same distressing way. All the Hohenzollern art of to-day has this sensational-sentimental quality which is apparently what William II means by "the ideal." It has neither the repose and proportion of the true classic, nor the realist's fidelity to humble natural life. It may, perhaps, be called romantic—a very poor, restricted, and vainglorious phase of romanticism, the romantic in modern military uniform. It well illustrates the pathetic impotence of the Emperor's career. Versatility, energy, and the cult of royal ancestors have spoiled him. It is not only that he has never given himself time to acquire an original thought. One may be a great man without being a great thinker ; and every man, prince ~~and~~ pauper, may achieve this much of greatness—a well-poised spirit, moving, not erratically like a weather-cock, but with the steady though sensitive swing of the compass-needle. How should one who knows no quietude or

modesty discover truth? The Emperor wanted a capital reflecting his own family pride; to say so plainly, however, would not be the Hohenzollern way. What appears, therefore, is that he wishes to elevate the people by giving them—sculpture being still a ^A pure and untainted "art—" "classic" marbles to contemplate. No good art could come by such a process; and we need not wonder that, clean and well-arranged as Berlin is, there is no great capital in Europe with so low a level of taste in its public decoration. Art draws its nourishment from the most intense life of the time; it was so in ancient Greece, in Renaissance Italy, nowhere and at no time could it be otherwise. Sculpture flourished most in the South for climatic reasons; it can never be the most characteristic art of a modern Northern city. But to add to this natural limitation a warning against "modern tendencies" was fatal. The Berlinse sculptures reflect the weaknesses of the mind of their royal patron and his Court. They are out of harmony with their surroundings and the spirit of the time. To the discerning observer, they offer an unsound thought in an unsuitable medium, for nothing can make of the Hohenzollerns either "classic" or modern figures—they fall between the two stools. The common man is simply not interested; a number of *Simplicissimus* or *Der Wahre Jacob* means more to him than the whole Sieges-Allee. Both illustrate a certain extravagance which is a national trait; a tendency to overdo everything, the uncouthness of a character morbidly restless, unsatisfied, and despite its bold appearances, unsure of itself.

The Emperor has spoken freely and at length on the subject of education, and has interested himself practically in the advancement, especially, of technical and scientific instruction. Here his impulsive utterances, often shrewd

and well justified, are less open to criticism ; he speaks suggestively, as a newspaper man writes, on the events of the day, and on special aspects of a system long honoured throughout the world.¹ But here, too, any more general view is limited, and even distorted, by an ambition to be accepted as universal overlord by right divine. At school, he had been struck by the fossilizing effect of old habit and old fashion. "Of twenty-one members of our class,² nineteen wore spectacles, and three of them had also to use other glasses when they wanted to see as far as the black-board." The classics were vivisected "with the scalpel of the grammarian, the fanatical philologist. It was a thing to weep over. What pains the Greek and Latin compositions cost ! Horace would have given up the ghost in reading them. Let us get rid of all this absurdity ! War to the knife against such teaching ! This system makes our youths know the syntax and grammar of the ancient languages better than the old Greeks themselves ; they learn by heart the generals, battles, and tactics of the Punic Wars, but they know nothing of the Seven Years' War, not to mention those of 1866 and 1870 that they have not yet 'done.'" Religious teaching should always be concentrated on the moral side of the subject ; historical lessons should bear upon the problems

¹ On the occasion of the centenary of the University of Berlin (Oct. 11, 1910), in announcing the establishment of a royal fund to create centres of scientific research, he said : "May the University guard faithfully its Prussian and German character ! Science is the common possession of the whole civilized world, and its conquests do not stop to-day at any frontier post. And yet, since every people should keep its particularism if it wishes to preserve its independence and its full worth, may the *Alma Mater Berolinensis* never forget that she is a German University, the seat of German manners and character !"

² From a letter to a former fellow-pupil at Cassel, April 2, 1885.

of to-day. Too much importance has been attributed to memorized learning, too little to character and the needs of modern life. "What most of our grammar-schools need is a national base. We ought to take German as the foundation of their studies; we do not want to make young Greeks and Romans, but young German patriots."¹

Here the cloven foot of political purpose is thrust forth without disguise. "If the school did what we had the right to expect of it (I say what I know, for I was trained at a grammar-school, and I know what went on there), it, from the outset and of its own accord, would have undertaken the struggle against Socialism. . . . Why, in fact, are our young men so often seduced by political novelties? Why does one meet so many self-styled universal reformers, with such obscure and confused ideas? Why is our Government so much criticized, to the glorification of foreign countries? I know the reason, gentlemen: it is because our young men do not know enough how our affairs have developed, and how our present situation"—this was at the moment when the renewal of the Anti-Socialist law was being proposed—"has its roots in the French Revolution. The grammar-schools have produced too large a number of intellectuals, more than was good for the nation and themselves. Prince Bismarck said a true word when he spoke of a proletariat of undergraduates. All these candidates for starvation, notably the journalistic gentlemen, come from the old grammar-school pupils who have not succeeded; and they are a danger to us." They spoke in the same way in Russia whenever a Minister in jack-boots drove the University students to revolt. "The statistics of school sickness,

¹ Dec. 4, 1890, at the first sitting of a Commission for the reform of secondary education.

notably myopia, are really shocking. . . . Think of the young generation you are preparing for the defence of the country. I must have soldiers. We want vigorous men who can also serve their country as intellectual leaders and officials. This mass of myopics are good for nothing, for what can a man do without eyes? . . . Men should not see the world through spectacles, gentlemen, but with their eyes simply : and they should find pleasure in contemplating the fatherland and its institutions."

There is at least a half-truth here ; it is more difficult to find anything admirable in the Emperor's open approval of the *Mensur*, the rapier play in which German students prove their manliness by carving each other's faces, or of his attitude toward duelling of a more serious kind. In the University Students' Clubs, the *Mensur* is practically obligatory . and in some associations a certain number of encounters must be carried through every term. The slashes received are everywhere regarded as marks of honour, decorative proofs of pluck and endurance. The fencing matches are closely associated with equally barbarous and more disgusting drinking parties ; and they are a recruiting ground for the more serious business of duelling, with sabre and pistol, by which even the children of the University are encouraged to wipe out the stain of real or imaginary insults. " Our *Mensuren* are often misunderstood by the public," said the Kaiser, in an address at a soirée of his old club at Bonn, the " Borussia," on May 7, 1891. " That should not disturb us. We who have been members of a students' association know better. Just as, in the Middle Ages, tournaments steeled the strength and courage of man, so the spirit that reigns in the corps gives us the degree of fortitude which is necessary in life, and which will last as

long as there are German Universities." It is an odd commentary upon this theory of hardening by petty vivisection that the Bavarian Government recently issued a decree forbidding schoolboys under seventeen years of age to indulge in the English game of football, the ground alleged being that "rough and reckless play might have a coarsening effect on the youth."¹

Duelling is so deeply rooted in the traditions of the classes from which German officers are drawn that no serious effort has yet been made to abolish this stupid and barbarous custom. Yet the Germans are an humane people, and modern ideas make progress among them. The result is a constant ambiguity in official references to the subject. The Emperor William I spoke somewhat dubiously when he said: "I will no more tolerate in the army an officer capable of wounding a comrade's honour than one who does not know how to vindicate his own," for one of the duellists must have been the aggressor; and, even if the ordeal by blood discovered the guilty party, he would not be cashiered. In 1896, the present Emperor issued a Cabinet Order commencing with the words: "It is my will that duels among my officers should be more effectively prevented than hitherto." The Order, however, merely emphasized the duty of military "Councils of Honour" to prevent fighting on trivial grounds. The difficulty is that the officer class who compose these Councils and Courts are firm believers in the duel as the backbone of a code applicable to soldiers, though too high for civilians. The Bavarian Government has long distinguished itself by forbidding the exercise of coercion upon any officer who does not choose to accept a challenge. Elsewhere, such a refusal, if it were not sup-

¹ *Kölnische Zeitung*, April 5, 1912.

ported by the regimental council, would mean ostracism. The question has often been discussed in the Reichstag ; on a recent occasion, a Socialist motion was adopted requiring that any officer who refused a challenge should in no circumstances be dismissed from the Army. The resolution has been ignored by the Government. The question was again discussed on April 24 and 30, 1912, with a characteristically ambiguous result. In a speech of three hours on the new Defence Bills, Herr Erzberger, the Centre leader, referred to the case of an army doctor who had been compelled to resign his position in the reserve because he refused to challenge a colleague. The War Minister, General von Heeringen, was reported as replying that " such a man does not belong to the social circles of the corps of officers." On the second date, however, he denied having used these words, but added that " the refusal to fight a duel was so sharply opposed to the views which prevailed in the army and wide circles outside it regarding the defence of wounded honour that officers who in a given case refused to fight a duel placed themselves in an impossible antagonism to the deepest convictions of their comrades."

This speech was itself reported to be the cause of a fatal duel which took place immediately afterwards, at Rastatt, near Karlsruhe, between a lieutenant and an army surgeon. From these facts, it can only be concluded that, if the Kaiser really desires the abolition of duelling, he cannot be the omnipotent chief depicted in his own speeches.

In the earlier years of his reign, the Emperor's affections seemed to be given undividedly to the army. Of his skill as an officer, there are different opinions ; and this is natural, for there has never been an opportunity to test it

and them. William II was a schoolboy during the Franco-German War ; and—unlike England, Russia, France, and Italy—Germany has been involved since in no serious campaign. There is no doubt of the Kaiser's interest in arms ; he is, above all, a soldier, went through his term of service with zeal, follows closely all the grand manœuvres, and gives constant evidence of his devotion to the interests of the military caste and profession. The best soldiers rarely talk much ; but, of course, there are exceptions. Many British officers and men, very few Germans, have seen active service—it is a difference bearing upon general character as well as upon professional competence. The Kaiser has never seen a battlefield ; but it was on military subjects that, for many years, he gave freest rein to his masterful temperament. In his first royal proclamation (June 15, 1888) he said : " In the army, absolute, indestructible fidelity to the sovereign head is the heritage that is transmitted from father to son, from generation to generation. . . . In my army, we are made for one another, and we shall remain closely bound whether God gives us peace or war." When, after the retirement of Bismarck, " discord and distrust reigned among the people," he looked to the senior service for the loyal obedience which he vainly sought elsewhere. " It was under the weight of heavy cares that I took the Crown. Everywhere I was distrusted, everywhere spoken evil of ; there was only one place where there was confidence and belief in me—it was the army ; and, supporting myself on it, confiding in God, I accepted the burden of power, knowing well that the army was the chief buttress of my country, the pillar of the throne of Prussia, to which the will of God has called me." ¹ " It is the soldier and

¹ June 15, 1898, to the regiments of the Guard, at Potsdam.

the army, not majorities and parliamentary decisions, that have forged the unity of the German Empire. It is on the army that my confidence rests."¹ "After a glorious war, thanks to the perfection it had attained under the command of the old master (William I), it has assured to our people, to Europe, and to the world twenty-five years of peace. . . . May political doctrines remain far from it! The army and its sovereign head are the only guarantees of the safety of the Empire and the peace of the world."²

Haunted as he is by mediæval ideas, he understands that, in military as in civil life, some concessions must be made to the modern spirit. He has often inveighed against luxury in the upper ranks of the army. "The ever-improving standard of popular education makes possible an extension of the circle from which our corps of officers is drawn. The aristocracy can no longer claim, as formerly, exclusively to furnish the army with officers. . . . I see the future of my army resting, also, on the sons of honourable middle-class families, possessing and cultivating the love of King, fatherland, the army, and the Christian religion. . . . I cannot agree that admission should depend on the possession of personal resources so considerable that the sons of less fortunate families are necessarily excluded. To suppress such abuses, I declare my will to be that, as a general rule, the commands of regiments of infantry, light cavalry, foot artillery, and engineers should not require more than 45 marks of private income per month, not more than 70 marks in the field artillery, and 150 marks in the cavalry. I do not deny that life in large

¹ April 18, 1891, presentation of colours at Potsdam.

² May 10, 1896, unveiling a Monument of William I at Frankfurt on the Jubilee of the peace of 1871.

garrisons, notably in the Guards, may make necessary an increase of these figures. But . . . the sums at present required have reached a figure which makes it absolutely impossible for country gentlemen to enter their sons in the army. . . . I wish with all my heart that each of my officers, after having performed his duties, may enjoy life gaily. But we must sensibly and steadily oppose the development of luxury in the army."¹ In the same spirit, after the Russo-Japanese war, while decorating impartially General Stoessel, the defender of Port Arthur, and General Nogi, "his courageous adversary," he advised the officers at Strassburg (May 8, 1905) to note that the Japanese officers had done excellently, but "the Russian army at Mukden was enfeebled by immorality and drunkenness, hence its defeat."

There are two different aspects of this cult of militarism which must be considered. As an influence on foreign relations, it does not greatly differ from the same institutions and the same habit of mind in other countries. In domestic relations, it differs radically from the spirit of government in France, England, and the United States, approaching much more closely to that of Russia. In the West, the army is an institution subject, like any other, to parliamentary control, and this is an essential feature of the democratic State. In Germany, the people as soldiers give their chiefs an absolute power the mere shadow of which they retain as electors. Although the Reichstag has to vote supplies, the Kaiser always speaks of himself, and is commonly regarded, as unquestioned master of the military forces of Prussia, and even of the Empire. "I want Christian soldiers who say their 'Our Father.' The soldier must not have his own way, but

¹ Army Order of March 29, 1890.

you must all have only one will, and it is mine ; there is only one law and it is mine." ¹ He not simply commends his personal opinions—for instance, his religious views—to the army, but seeks to impose them as law. "If you want to be good soldiers, you must be good Christians, and have religion in your hearts. . . . Never forget that you are called to be defenders of our fatherland, that you are engaged to protect order and religion." "He who is not a good Christian is not a brave man"—the Emperor was, however, already making friends in Constantinople !—"and is not fit to be a Prussian soldier." ³

Naturally, the Socialists asked how Frederick the Great would have passed this test. Such questions were another proof of the original sinfulness of these enemies of the State. "This party which dares to attack the very foundations of the State, which arrays itself against religion, and does not even stop short of the person of the Sovereign, must be reduced to impotence. I shall rejoice to take in my own hand of any man, workman or prince, provided that he will help me in this combat. . . . We will not abandon it till we have relieved the country of this malady, which threatens to maim family life and, especially, the holiest thing the German possesses, the position of women." ⁴ If the campaign has not been abandoned, it is at least less a war of words than it was in the early days when the Emperor spoke alternately in threats and cajolery. There is a speech to recruits at Potsdam (on Nov. 23, 1891) which will never be forgotten : "More

¹ Nov. 16, 1893, address to recruits.

² Nov. 15, 1894, at the administration of the oath to conscripts in Berlin.

³ Nov. 16, 1897, to recruits at Potsdam.

⁴ Feb. 26, 1897.

than ever, unbelief and discontent raise their head. It may happen, though God forbid, that you may have to fire on your own parents or brothers. Prove your fidelity, then, by your sacrifice." In milder temper, at Breslau, on December 2, 1895, he said: "The more party formulas and interests are put forward, the more firmly do I count on my army, and the more confidently do I hope that it will always follow my wishes, whether abroad *or at home*."

We shall see that the navy has since shared with the army the Emperor's affections. One illustration of his outlook may be cited here. Speaking at the Elbe regatta banquet on June 19, 1912, he said: "That fine and interesting, and for a time powerful, growth, the Hansa, was doomed to pass away because it lacked the backing of Imperial power. Through the creation of the Empire under my grandfather, all that has changed, and the German trader can now go quietly on his way not under a foreign flag, but under his own flag, and he can strain all his abilities to the full and be sure that, where it is necessary, the protection of the Empire is at his back. That is possible only when all our forces are gathered together under our German flag. But as you know the flag must fly in honour. Its sheet must not heedlessly be unfolded to the winds. It must not heedlessly be planted where one is not sure of being able to defend it. You will understand why I have practised reserve in regard to the spreading of the German flag where, perhaps, it was desired by many. I have been guided by an old Hanseatic principle which is inscribed in bold letters on the Rathhaus at Lübeck: 'It is easy to fasten the flag to the mast, but it costs much to haul it down again with honour.'" "The seas do not separate, but unite nations," he had once said. On sea, as on land,

however, though "warlike designs would be a wanton criminality," it is power that counts, and the power must be directed by an absolute overlord.

In fact, though time has brought a certain reserve, it has not altered the Emperor's fundamental ideas and prepossessions. The storms over the *Daily Telegraph* interview and the Tweedmouth letter, to which we shall presently refer, had been followed by a long silence. At last, the royal orator could keep peace no longer; and at Königsberg, on August 25, 1910, he burst out with a characteristic restatement of his conviction of irresponsibility by right divine. In this the old capital of East Prussia, "the Great Elector, by his own right, made himself sovereign Duke." In like manner, Frederick William I followed; "and, here again, my grandfather by his own right placed on his head the Royal Crown of Prussia, once more declaring with emphasis that it was bestowed on him by God's grace alone, and not by Parliaments, national assemblies, or the popular voice; so that he regarded himself as the chosen instrument of heaven, and as such performed his duties as a ruler. . . . Looking upon myself as the instrument of the Lord, regardless of the views and opinions of the hour, I shall go my way, which is devoted solely to the well-being and peaceful development of the Fatherland." No less characteristic was the reference to Queen Luise, "this angel in human form," "the exalted martyr," who "teaches us that we men should cultivate all martial virtues, and that, as the women and maidens did not spare their tresses, we should always be ready to keep our armour without a flaw, seeing that the neighbouring Powers have made such enormous progress. Alone upon our armour does our peace depend. What shall our women learn from Queen Luise?—that the chief duty of

German women consists not in attending meetings and joining organizations, but in placid work in the house and the family ; that they should bring up the young generation in obedience ; and that they should make it clear to their children that it is not the object of existence to enjoy life at the expense of others, but to keep the interests of the Fatherland alone in view."

Finally, while he has sometimes shown the irritation inevitable to so lively a character, the Kaiser has constantly seized opportunities of saying a kindly or generous word where it would give pleasure. His open admiration for his grandmother, Queen Victoria, his unaffected liking for things English, and his wish to soften relations with France were subjects of gloomy criticism in the early years of the reign. On the death of Marshal MacMahon in 1893, he sent a sympathetic telegram to the widow ; and so to Madame Carnot on the assassination of the President in the following year, when two French officers condemned for espionage were pardoned as a mark of good feeling. In 1895, the presence of the French squadron at the opening of the Kiel Canal was due to the Emperor's initiative. The terrible fire at the Charity Bazaar in Paris in May, 1897, the loss of the *Bourgogne*, and many subsequent events have evoked expressions of which one of the most characteristic was addressed to the German miners who had taken their life-saving apparatus to Courrières to help in the work of rescue, in March, 1906 : " You have proved that there is something that passes the frontier-posts and unites peoples, of whatever race they may be : it is love of one's neighbour. You have obeyed that commandment of Our Lord."

If we put together these self-revealed traits, and place the outline that emerges against a background character-

istic of the land and the age, we shall have a figure more real, more human, more sympathetic, and much less terrible than that which the imagination of most courtiers and most critics has portrayed. The art to do justice to the subject is indeed, beyond us ; it would be not unworthy of the magic pen that set off the poor gentleman Quixano, or Queseda, of La Mancha, to exhibit in many pathetic adventures the delusions of chivalry, and cured him only on his death-bed. "Forgive me, friend," said the Don, "for making you a madman, by persuading you to believe, as I did myself, that there have been formerly, and are now, knights-errant in the world." "Alas!" answered Sancho, sobbing, "dear Sir, do not die ; but take my counsel, and live many years ; for the greatest madness a man can commit in his life is to suffer himself to die without anybody's killing him. Be not lazy, Sir, but get out of bed, and let us be going ; and who knows but behind some bush or other we may find the Lady Dulcinea disenchanted as fine as heart could wish?" "Gentlemen," replied Don Quixote, "let us proceed fair and softly. Look not for this year's birds in last year's nests. I was mad ; I am sober : I was Don Quixote de la Mancha ; I am now, as I have said, the good Alonzo Quixano ; and may my unfeigned repentance, and my sincerity, restore me to the esteem you once had for me ; and let the notary proceed." We have nothing of this art ; besides, Don Wilhelm is yet far, let us hope, from the end of his story ; though he is now fifty-three years of age, he is still faithful to his earlier dreams, and will yet search many old nests for young birds.

Without the aid of humour, our sketch cannot be a very congruous one. The Emperor is a true Teuton in his idealism, his sentimentality, his strenuous devotion to

duty as he sees it, and his kindly anxiety to model the nation on the old-time patriarchal household. But he is only too evidently out of harmony with much of his surroundings ; and in himself there is plainly visible a conflict between old and new elements, between an obstinate blood-inheritance and a quick sensitiveness to certain aspects of modern life. The main body of the people does not wish to be patriarchalized ; it wants more liberty, not less. He himself wishes to provide schools and universities, factories, farms, and fleets with the latest scientific equipment ; but whoever looks with scientific eye upon absentee landlords, the Prussian electoral system, or divine-right monarchy, is in his eyes a dangerous enemy of an inspired order. He makes friends of the Krupps and Ballins, the captains of competitive industrialism, and yet imagines that the pre-industrial organization of society can be maintained. In the very speech in which he eulogizes Queen Luise as the " angel " of the national resurrection, he tells the educated women of a century later that their service should be restricted to the privacy of the home. He wishes his people and every other people to enjoy the blessings of peace ; but it is the precarious and expensive peace of the feudal retainer whose armour became heavier year by year until at length the whole mediæval structure broke down. He is desperately in earnest in his religion ; but if the Kaiser's singular combination of Protestant and Catholic orthodoxies be right, how can the opposition of the two churches be maintained, and why should one of them be by law established ? The army is the " nation in arms " ; yet the nation has one law, the army another—the officer class, in particular, is to obey a code of honour and courts all its own. We need not further multiply examples.

A quieter, more reflective mind might have escaped these inconsistencies, and would certainly have sought to reconcile the divergent impulses whence they spring. Lacking this intellectual power, the Emperor William has been saved from disaster by a certain pliancy which leads him to give way before the rising democratic temper breaks bounds. It is here that we perceive the practical judgment of the German people on the Hohenzollern claims. Except in the early years of the reign and in a few short intervals since, the Kaiser has enjoyed a measure of popularity remarkable in the political circumstances. Had he been made of harder stuff, or been regarded, in his own words, as "the instrument of God," there might have been more obedience, but there would have been less affection. In his heart, if not openly, the educated German contemplates the pretension to divine-right as the Londoner contemplates the Lord Mayor's coach. It is a harmless vanity of the Prussian royal family. If Bavarians or Saxons recognize any divine right, it is that of their own royal families. The Kaiser holds his position outside Prussia not by any such ancient tenure, but by recent contract. It is in this capacity that he has achieved the one large original work of his reign, the construction of the federal fleet. In this contractual capacity, he is the superior of the King of Prussia, as well as of the other federal sovereigns. The very making of modern Germany, therefore, has displaced the old monarchical pretensions. The question, however, is felt to be of small importance in every day life. Sometimes the Kaiser speaks wisely, sometimes otherwise. But always he is a very human being, and, at least, the ablest, most energetic, and most interesting sovereign of the time. Much can be pardoned for his virtues and his

patriotism. No doubt, there must soon be changes. The Teuton is in no hurry for revolution. Meanwhile, he reflects how much worse things would be if the man who dismissed Bismarck had been the greater of the twain.

CHAPTER IX

WELT-POLITIK

I. ENGLAND AND THE ALLIANCES

TWENTY-TWO years have passed since, with the fall of Bismarck, the Empire entered on its "new course," and the Continental system was fixed upon a balance of the Triple and Double Alliances. Because life seems to develop a more rapid and complex movement, it is difficult for us children of the period to see it whole; because it seems now to be approaching some kind of climax, it is impossible to be sure of its meaning and outcome; because we are no longer contemplating the tardy coming-of-age of a land-locked people, but a competition of nations in which our own destiny is involved, it is very difficult to regard the facts objectively, dispassionately. It is necessary, however, to make the effort to obtain a wide and unbiassed view of German foreign policy, for no great modern State, its position and resources, can to-day be envisaged without regard to its external relations. The aim of this chapter, then, will be to outline briefly the facts of the outflow of German imperial power and the conflicts arising therefrom, with particular reference to the Anglo-German conflict, which is the crux of the world-politics of our time. We shall then be in a position to return to the main line of our subject.

The period may be thus generally characterized: It is marked by the complete opening of Asia and Africa to European ambitions; the emergence of Germany and the United States as first-class exporting countries; the rapid increase of productive power throughout the West, and the speeding-up of communications; the creation of a new sort of rivalry, as a result of this process; and the ripening, under its pressure, of Protectionism and Militarism on the one hand, of Socialism and the practice of International Arbitration on the other. In every sphere of human activity, the horizons have been immeasurably widened. Intellectually, it has been a time of progress in popular education, and of growing international intercourse. Sociologically, the outstanding facts have been the falling birth and death-rates in the advanced "white" countries, and the mingled effects of "civilization" upon the coloured peoples. Politically, the spirit broadly called democratic has made great strides; the American and French republics have steadily gathered strength; England has thrown over *laissez faire*, and has doubled her imperial populations; Russia, Japan, China, Turkey, and Persia have made a painful entry upon the path of constitutional government. Economically, the life of the world has been to a large extent unified, on the basis of money exchange in the most backward, and credit in the most forward countries. The vast increase of production of both food stuffs and manufactures results, first, in a general fall of prices, then, in a general raising of Protective tariffs, next in a competition for estates in Africa and Asia (as markets and sources of supplies of raw material), and, finally, in a competition of armaments which expresses the animosities raised in the whole process. Germany, the last comer

among the great Western States, has not rushed upon an empty stage, but into a world bustling with fresh vigour, forgetful of some ancient causes of quarrel, yet full of exuberance, readiness for experiment, carelessness of danger. The force of war and the forces of peace have swollen gigantically side by side; and international life is a prodigious ferment of whose outcome it becomes more and more difficult to make any forecast.

The period may be divided into two long decades, which we may describe as (1)—from 1890 to 1901—that of Anglo-German friendship, and general competition for colonies, and (2)—from 1901 to the present day—that of Anglo-German rivalry, and general competition for financial concessions. With more precise accuracy, the end of the first and the beginning of the second decade may be marked as the interval of England's "splendid isolation," in which the Continental Powers drew together, and the island State had no European support.

The friendliness of England and Germany in the first half of the period was, in the main, a reflection of the hostility of both States toward France and Russia. In the one case, the cause of hostility was purely Continental; in the other it was extra-European. The rise of German power had, in fact, compelled France and Russia to look outward; and the growth of European and American tariffs had had the same results upon England. In their search for new lands of exploitation, the old enemies came constantly into conflict. From 1884 onwards, France and England were feverishly building warships against one another, while there was ceaseless colonial bickering. The conclusion of the Franco-Russian Alliance and the renewal of the Triple Alliance in 1891 produced a balance in Europe which necessarily diverted the surplus

energies of the great Powers to other fields. This change synchronised with the modification of the German tariff under Caprivi's commercial treaties, a direct boon to British trade. In 1894, England began her fruitless struggle with Russia for the protection of the Armenians against Abdul Hamid, and for reform in Macedonia. In 1895 she began to warn other Powers off the Nile Valley ; but it was only in 1898 that this point was secured, with the withdrawal of Marchand from Fashoda. In the same year, Russia made an effective appearance in the China Sea, leasing Port Arthur. In 1900 she occupied Manchuria ; and a year later the Siberian railway was completed. In 1902 the Anglo-Japanese Alliance was set up as a bar against further Russian aggressions in the Far East.

Amid these preoccupations, it had been easy for England to view with a friendly eye the relatively modest colonial essays of the German Empire. In 1884 the London Government had given way before German remonstrances with regard to the Congo ; in May, 1885, and August, 1886, treaties delimiting Togoland and the Kamerun were concluded ; in April, 1886, the two Governments agreed upon their future spheres in the West Pacific ; in November, 1886, and July, 1887, they recognized the independence of the Sultanate of Zanzibar, the German East African possessions, and the British right to Somaliland ; in June, 1890, Germany gave up Uganda, and received Heligoland, while England received Zanzibar ; at the same time, the two Powers signed treaties which defined their spheres in South-West Africa. Soon after the accession of William II, it became evident that, in this field, the Bismarckian tradition would not long continue. The continental position of the Empire was

assured. Any new sovereign would have had to listen to the merchants of Hamburg and Bremen. William II was doubly disposed to do so.

Half-English by blood, he was wholly English in his love of the sea. In mystical moments he found in it a divine counsellor; at other times it was a path of imperial profit and glory. Referring to his yachting holidays, he said (on March 5, 1890): "Alone with the open sea, on the ship's bridge, having above him only the heavens that God has sprinkled with stars, he who descends into himself will not mistake the usefulness of such voyages. I wish many of my compatriots could live through such hours, when a man weighs up what he has attempted, and what accomplished. It is a cure for vanity that we all need." "It might be supposed," he told Admiral Hopkins (October 30, 1889), "that my interest in the British fleet dated from my appointment as Admiral. Not so. From my infancy, when, a small boy, I played in Portsmouth Dockyard, I have been much interested in British ships." This was shortly after the visit to Osborne when Queen Victoria made her grandson a British Admiral. He then thought of the German army and the British navy as partners in the protection of the world's peace.¹ "Our

¹ August 5, 1889, at Sandown, in reply to a toast given by the Prince of Wales, afterwards King Edward: "Germany possesses all that corresponds to her needs; England has also a fleet such as she needs, and that is considered by Europe generally as an important factor for the maintenance of peace." On July 10, 1891, at the London Guildhall: "In this charming country I always feel at home. . . . Besides, the same blood flows in the veins of Germans and Englishmen. Like my grandfather and my never-to-be-forgotten father, I shall do all in my power to maintain the historic friendship between our two nations, which have been so often united for the defence of liberty and justice. My end is, above all, to maintain peace, for peace alone can inspire the confidence necessary for the good development

future is on the sea " he had said, just after the cession of Heligoland (at Stettin on September 23, 1890); but it was only with oft repetition that the words took in England any peculiar significance, and then only as they met the rising complaint in England expressed in that other potent phrase, "Made in Germany." On June 26, 1895, the British Channel Fleet took part in the ceremonial opening of the Kiel Canal; and the Emperor, speaking on board the *Royal Sovereign*, again referred to the admiration of Germans for the British Navy. Immediately after this historic point, the beginnings of Anglo-German hostility are to be traced.

II. THE EMPEROR AND THE BOER WAR

During the autumn, the Emperor was again in England, and at close quarters with the newspaper critics of the Congo settlement. On the following Christmas Eve, the German Consul at Pretoria warned his Government that the Johannesburg English were preparing an attack on the Boers. The Jameson raid followed; and on January 3, 1896, William II telegraphed to President Kruger: "I sincerely congratulate you that, without making any appeal for the help of foreign Powers, you

of science, art, and commerce." In July and August, 1892, the Kaiser again took part in the Cowes regatta. On January 22, 1893, during the visit of the Duke of Edinburgh to Berlin, he spoke of the British fleet and its heroes as "the stars on which our officers and men fix their eyes," the models that they copied, and speculated on a day when the two navies might have to "fight side by side against a common enemy."

have succeeded, with your people and your own strength, in repulsing the armed bands which have troubled the peace of your land, in re-establishing order, and in defending the independence of your people against attacks from without." Various interpretations have been placed upon this famous despatch. On the one hand, it has been represented to be an indirect but characteristically sympathetic way of saying that the Transvaal might count upon diplomatic, but not on military, aid from Berlin. On the other hand, it has been connected prejudicially with the earlier German designs in South Africa, and with the fact that Germany was acting at the time together with Russia and France against Japan, if not against England also. In the Paris correspondence of the *Times* (October 29, 1908), the following statement is said to belong to "the realm of irrefragable fact": "On January 1, 1896, the day before the Kruger telegram, Baron Marschall von Bieberstein, then German Foreign Secretary, paid a visit to M. Herbette, then French Ambassador in Berlin. He came, presumably with his Imperial Master's approval, to ask M. Herbette if France would join Germany in European diplomatic action with a view to securing the independence and integrity of the Boer States. M. Herbette, in reply, pointed out that France had no particular interest in South African questions, and that, first of all, he would like to know whether, as a *quid pro quo*, Germany was prepared to give France her support in the Egyptian question, which at that time closely interested the French Government. Baron Marschall replied in a negative sense, whereupon M. Herbette stated that, even before consulting his Government, he felt sure that France could not interest herself in Germany's projects with regard to South Africa." It is possible, and even probable,

that a tentative like this, which would certainly have had the support of German opinion, may have been made without the Emperor's knowledge. However this may be, we know that Baron Marschall left Berlin soon afterwards for Constantinople, where he remained as Ambassador till May, 1912, then succeeding Count Wolff-Metternich in London. He was followed at the German Foreign Office in June, 1897, by Count von Bülow, who became Chancellor three years later.

While the Kaiser's telegram annoyed the Salisbury Government and its supporters, the Jameson raid seemed to the average German and Frenchman to prove the nefarious character of British imperialism. The Emperor saw the matter in no such light. Years later, in the famous *Daily Telegraph* interview, he claimed credit for having opposed those who wished "not only to save the Boer Republics, but also to humiliate England in the dust."

There can be little doubt of the sincerity of this claim. For him, the British way was that which, sooner or later, Germany, too, must follow. "The German Empire has become a world-empire," he said during the Imperial Jubilee (January 18, 1896). "Everywhere, in the most distant parts of the globe, live some of our compatriots. German products, German science, German industry are expanding beyond the ocean. The value of what Germany sends oversea is counted by the thousands of millions [of marks]. It is your duty, gentlemen, to help me to bind this great German empire to our empire in Europe." But, for this, an instrument was needed. The Kaiser expressed (April 24, 1897) his regret not to be able to send Prince Henry on a better ship to the Jubilee of Queen Victoria, "when all other countries will shine with their proud cruisers. It is the sad result of the pro-

ceedings of the anti-patriots who have been able to prevent the building of the necessary ships. But I shall have no rest till I have put my fleet on the high level of the army." A more effective argument was the melodramatic departure of Prince Henry later in the year for China, with instructions mercilessly to apply "the mailed fist" to the Boxers. Speaking at Hanover, on September 4, 1898, the Emperor referred to the Anglo-German co-operation in arms at Waterloo, and congratulated Queen Victoria on Lord Kitchener's defeat of "an enemy superior in numbers"—the Mahdists at Omdurman. A few days later, in a telegram to the *Flottverein*, he declared that "a great navy is one of the most necessary conditions of the maintenance of the grandeur and consideration of the Empire, and the prosperous development of our economic interests."

Directly the Kiel Canal was completed, five battleships (of the Kaiser class—11,180 tons) were laid down, and these were followed in 1899-1900 by five rather larger vessels. By a Cabinet order of March, 1899, the chief naval command was separated from the administration, and the latter constituted a Government department under a Secretary of State. The Kaiser thought this a very modest beginning, as well he might when he reflected that the British fleet was then as strong as those of France, Germany, Russia, and Italy combined. On the occasion of the launch of a cruiser at Hamburg, on October 18, 1899, he lamented the slowness of the German public in appreciating the need of naval protection for their foreign interests. "It is with profound disquietude that I have noticed what slow progress interest in and comprehension of great world-moving questions make in Germany. Let us look around: how much the aspect of the world has

changed in a few years ! Old empires disappear, new ones are born. Nations unknown to the vulgar have suddenly entered into the circle of great countries, and made an active competition. . . . All this demands of me and my Government efforts that can only be crowned with success if Germans, renouncing party divisions, rank themselves solidly behind us. . . . Just now, our navy and our oversea interests are paying dearly for these old political sins. If all strengthening of the fleet had not been obstinately refused during the first eight years of my reign, despite my urgent prayers and warnings, which were replied to with criticism and pleasantry, how much otherwise we might have developed our oversea commerce and interests." And again, in launching the cruiser *Wittelsbach* at Wilhelmshaven (July 4, 1900), he protested that nothing "on the sea or beyond it" could now be decided without consideration of Germany and the German Emperor. "I do not think that our German people conquered and shed their blood under the guidance of their princes thirty years ago to be ignored now in great international decisions. If that happened, there would be an end once for all of the position of the German Empire in the world ; and I am not disposed to allow it to happen. To employ without hesitation the most appropriate, and if necessary the most energetic means, in this sense is my duty and my highest prerogative." What "William the Great" had done at home, he would do abroad. He was glad now to be better understood ; "but let us continue without relaxation, and end quickly the work begun ; and so we shall impose peace on the sea also." ¹

During these years England had had to meet Russian

¹ Telegram to the Norddeutscher Lloyd, May 13, 1900.

antagonism both in the Near and the Far East, and French claims in Siam, Madagascar, and Tunis, on the Upper Nile, and on the Middle and Lower Niger. Lord Salisbury had been brought by the dominating spirit of Mr. Chamberlain to do lip-service to the new Imperialism.¹ Germany had taken advantage of the situation in the Far East to obtain a lease of Kiao-Chau and certain mining and railway privileges in Shantung (1897), had made friends with the author of the Armenian massacres, obtaining in return the concession for the Bagdad Railway (1900), and, between these points, had appeared at the First Hague Conference (1899) as the chief opponent of disarmament and effective arbitration. It may be held that these proceedings do not altogether accord with the portrait of the Emperor to be drawn from his own speeches. The same objection would hold against any eloquent statesman. Acts and words must be judged together, the one in the light of the other. The further such a comparison be carried the less difference will there be found in average integrity between the official spokesmen of different lands. But, while William II has always been the master of his Ministers, it would be unreasonable to attribute to him every act of policy, or to forget the great difference between his naïve impulses and the steady Bismarckian tradition of the Wilhelmstrasse bureaucrats.

The supple mind of von Bülow, Foreign Minister in

¹ "If we mean to hold our own against the efforts of all the civilized Powers of the world to strangle our commerce, by their prohibitive tariffs, we must be prepared to take the requisite measures to open new markets for ourselves among the half-civilized or uncivilized nations of the globe; and we must not be afraid if that effort, which is vital to our industries, should bring with it new responsibilities of Empire and Government." (*Times*, May 24, 1895.)

1897, Chancellor from 1900 to 1909, must, in particular, be allowed for: a mind rather Latin than Teuton, cultivated, polished, witty, and gaily sceptical, wielding easily all the regular diplomatic weapons, and showing a remarkable aptitude for the petty transactions and manœuvres necessary to Ministerial work in the Prussian Landtag and the Imperial Parliament. A pure opportunist, he repeats the Kaiser's idea in surer and more telling form. "The time has gone when Germans will leave to one of their neighbours the land, to another the sea, keeping for themselves the air where pure doctrine floats." The people sympathize with the Boers. Very well; but "there are crowns higher than those awarded by the Pan-German League." To wish to save other people may be a private virtue; it is a public fault to which the Germans have been too prone. "We cannot in the quarrels that divide foreign peoples ask which is right, and which is wrong. The statesman is not a judge. He has only one duty, to protect the rights and interests of his own country. I cannot conduct foreign policy from the point of view of pure ethics."¹ It is Bismarck in knee-breeches, a young and smiling pupil who will better the terrible old master by the use of suasion instead of force. He found at length that this is not possible. Meanwhile, his collaboration with the Emperor makes a remarkable spectacle. They are both Germans (as Mephistopheles and Faust flowed from the same German brain), yet how diverse. The cynic makes no bones about his traffic-policy at the Hamidian Court. "We play at Constantinople, not without success, the flute of influence and diplomatic persuasion. . . . But as for participating in pressure on the Porte—never!" Crete

¹ Reichstag, December 13, 1900.

is not worth a single German sailor. "If difficulties arise, we shall stand aside. If they become serious, we shall silently put our flute on the table, and leave the Concert-hall."¹ Compare the Kaiser's message to the Sultan from Damascus, eight months later:—"Moved by the thought that in this place lived one of the most chivalrous sovereigns of all time, the great sultan Saladin, a knight without fear and without reproach, who often taught his enemies what was true chivalry, I gladly seize the occasion to thank the Sultan Abdul Hamid for his hospitality. May the Sultan and the three hundred million Mussulmans scattered over the earth be assured that the German Emperor will always be their friend." To what common root of the Teutonic nature Hohenzollern chivalry and Bülovian cynicism may be traced is less apparent than that they lead up to the same results—more ships, more concessions, more taxes.

In the same interval of the two decades we are considering occurred several diplomatic adventures, the history of which is still shrouded in mystery. The first of these consisted ostensibly in an effort to protect the South African colonies of Portugal against British designs. On June 19, 1898, a few days before M. Hanotaux gave place to M. Delcassé as French Foreign Minister, Count Münster, the German Ambassador in Paris, called at the Quai d'Orsay, and proposed joint action to this end. No answer was given to the proposal, although in the following autumn France was reduced to the humiliation of withdrawing Captain Marchand from Fashoda.² The German Government then turned to London, and dis-

¹ Reichstag. February 8, 1898.

² André Mévil: *De la Paix de Francfort à la Conférence d'Algésiras*.—E. Lémonon: *L'Europe et la Politique Britannique*, p. 135.

THE EMPEROR AND THE BOER WAR 411

cussions of a possible future division of Mozambique and Angola took place. Why they came to nothing is not known; but the existing treaties constituting the defensive alliance between England and Portugal¹ date from 1898; and both countries have disavowed any designs of colonial liquidation.

Throughout the summer of 1899—while the Hague Conference (May 18–July 29) was declaring, among other things, that it was the duty of neutrals to offer their mediation in order to settle disputes without violence—war was preparing in South Africa. On August 12, the *Times* declared that “the last lingering hesitation” to the resort to armed force had been removed, and, three days later, a virtual ultimatum was delivered at Pretoria; but it was not till October 9 that the conflict actually began. European and American opinion was outraged. Count Muravieff, whose name, as Russian Foreign Minister, had been appended to the Tsar’s Rescript of 1898, at once endeavoured to obtain a joint mediation between British and Boers. He put his plan before Senor Silvela, at San Sebastian, early in October, before M. Delcassé in Paris on October 10, and before the Berlin Foreign Office early in November. The exact proposal has never been made known. In some quarters, an Anglophobe and coercive character has been attributed to it.² On the other hand, French and German official references to the incident alike represent the tentative

¹ British Command Paper 9088 of 1912.

² As by Mr. Lucien Wolff (“Diplomaticus”) in the *Fortnightly Review* of December, 1899, and in the *Daily Graphic* in October, 1908, who says his information came “from a British official source, together with a suggestion that the public interest would be served if I could manage to give Count Muravieff ‘a rap over the knuckles.’”

as perfectly amicable in character. A precedent for such action had, indeed, recently occurred. On the eve of the American-Spanish war, at the end of March 1897, Spain had appealed for European intervention. The British Government had at first favoured pacific representations; but Germany refused to act upon the proposal of mediation suggested by the Ambassadors in Washington on April 14—the Kaiser, is said to have described it as “completely futile, purposeless, and therefore prejudicial”—and so, after two days’ consideration, did England.¹

After consideration of the Russian proposal, M. Delcassé informed Count Muravieff that France would join in friendly representations in London, but would not go further. Berlin was then tested. Here the proposal was promptly rejected. Not content with rejecting it, the Kaiser visited London at the end of November, and warned the Queen and the Government what was afoot. On November 27, Count von Bülow visited Mr. Chamberlain at his house at Prince’s Gate; and he is understood to have repeated an invitation he had already made to Lord Salisbury that England should join the Triple Alliance. Both British statesmen replied that this was impossible; but, speaking at Leicester, three days later, Mr. Chamberlain said that “a new Triple Alliance between the Teutonic race and the two great branches of the Anglo-Saxon race” would be an effective guarantee of peace and “a potent influence on the future of the world.” This “maladroit” utterance, as Lord Rosebery termed it, harmed rather than helped its purpose; and Mr. Chamberlain was himself, shortly afterwards, incurring the anger of German patriots by a favourable comparison of the conduct of the British army in South Africa with that of the German

¹ G. H. Perris—*Our Foreign Policy*, pp. 28–33.

troops in the war of 1870. "Let him be, and don't bother yourselves," replied Count Bülow in the Reichstag (January 8, 1902), quoting a *mot* of Frederick the Great—"he is biting granite."

In the following Spring, Count Muravieff repeated his attempt to procure joint mediation to bring the South African war to an end. M. Delcassé gave to Count Osten-Sacken (February 28, 1900) the same reply as before. On his way back to Russia, Count Muravieff visited Potsdam, and saw the Kaiser, who, according to some accounts, asked whether, as a condition of his participation, France and Russia would first enter into a pledge to guarantee the territorial *status quo* in Europe, that is, not to attempt the recovery of Alsace-Lorraine, in case trouble should result.¹ This has been treated as a conclusive proof of hypocrisy on the part of the sovereign who has claimed to have saved England on this occasion from deep humiliation. In the *Daily Telegraph* "interview" (October 28, 1908), the Emperor is represented as saying that it was "one of his dearest wishes to live on the best terms with England, though the prevailing

¹ *Deutsche Revue*, September, 1908. According to the Paris correspondence of the *Times*, October 29, 1908, Count Muravieff "pointed out that the moment was now more suitable for making representations to England, since the tide of war had turned somewhat in her favour, and British national feeling would, consequently, no longer be so sensitive. The German reply was that the contemplated action might not be the affair of a day, it might be prolonged. Germany would, therefore, like as a preliminary—it was doubtless meant, if not said, as a guarantee against all eventualities—that the three Powers, Germany, Russia, and France, should begin by reciprocally pledging themselves to 'maintain the *status quo* in Europe.' France at once felt that this proposal meant that she should expressly ratify and consecrate afresh the Treaty of Frankfurt; and she absolutely declined to be a party to the German proposal. The negotiations thus dropped."

'sentiment among large portions of the middle and lower classes of his own people is not friendly to England." He had proved his friendship by refusing to receive the Boer delegates at Berlin, while other European peoples had "received and fêted them," and the German people, had they come, "would have crowned them with flowers." By refusing the invitation of France and Russia "to join with them in calling upon England to put an end to the war," and by sending to Queen Victoria, in December, 1899, a plan of campaign drawn up by himself and submitted to his General Staff for criticism—a plan, he said, running on very much the same lines as that adopted successfully by Lord Roberts—he had shown his goodwill. It may well be asked whether it is conceivable that, within three months of this Quixotic action, the Emperor would have been found conspiring with the foreign statesmen he had recently rebuffed, to upset the island State which formed a model for all that was most cherished in his own policy? The supposition not only does a personal injustice; it implies a clearness of hostile purpose and a power of action in the German Imperial Government at this time of which there is no substantial evidence.

The facts seem to be that the Emperor exaggerated his service to England, and that his critics exaggerated the mediation incident. When the matter was discussed in the Reichstag eight years later, Count von Bülow, speaking for his master,¹ said that the *Daily Telegraph* interview was a collocation of statements by the Emperor made to private individuals on different occasions; that the details were not exactly accurate; that there was no "plan of campaign" properly so-called, but only some "general aphorisms on military tactics," contained in

¹ November 10-11, 1908.

letters to Queen Victoria ; and that the Imperial Government had warned the Transvaal as early as May, 1899, that it had better make peace with England, since it would be alone in hostilities, and there could hardly be any doubt as to the result. As to the "intervention," Count Bülow stated in the Reichstag at the time that "in no quarter and at no time has the idea of any kind of mediation, except peaceful mediation with the assent of England, been entertained." Whatever the exact proposal may have been, it was made in the name of the Tsar, the author of the Hague Conference, later to be England's partner in the Triple Entente ; and it was welcomed no more by Germany than by France.

Pacific intervention, declared by the International Conference of 1899 to be a duty of neutral States, proves to be a difficult and ungrateful task. It was tried in 1898 between Spain and the United States, and failed. In 1900, the Continental Powers did not go beyond the preliminary step described above ; but the American Government made overtures to which Lord Salisbury ¹ replied that Her Majesty's Government could not accept the intervention of any foreign Power. During the Russo-Japanese war of 1904-5, it was, no doubt, felt to be absurd to preach peace in St. Petersburg. In 1908, Sir Edward Grey and M. Isvolsky endeavoured to make Austria listen to public opinion after her Balkan *coup* ; and they failed so completely as to discourage any similar action when Italy invaded Tripoli in the autumn of 1911. There is no more reason to doubt the pacific quality of one than another of these essays. The attitude of the German Government has, indeed, been more consistent throughout these episodes than that of any other Power, just because it

¹ Despatch to Mr. Secretary Hay, March 13, 1900.

takes the most steadily conservative view of sovereignty and the right of might. The Berlin bureaucrats never have been, are not, and do not pretend to be, friends of little peoples struggling to keep their independence. The Emperor and his Ministers happened on the eve of the Boer war to be courting Russia and France. They would care very little for the fate of the Boers ; but it would be natural for them to give a polite ear to a Russo-French proposition. ' If Bismarck had been alive, and the Emperor had not been half an Englishman, the enterprise might have gone further.

Probably William II got scanty thanks for his trip to London and his " military aphorisms." Nevertheless, he refused to receive Mr. Kruger, in December, 1900 ; a month later he visited England again for the funeral of Queen Victoria ; and, on being appointed Field Marshal of the British Army by King Edward, he telegraphed to Lord Roberts " hastening to apprise him of this signal mark of His Majesty's affection," and rejoicing " to know that I shall be one of your comrades." In the autumn of 1902, when Pan-German agitation was at its height, the Emperor made a still more marked demonstration of his Anglophile temper by entertaining Lord Roberts, Mr. Brodrick (afterwards Lord Midleton), General French, General Kelly-Kenny, and General Ian Hamilton as his guests at the army manœuvres, and at a State banquet at Potsdam.

III. THE BAGDAD RAILWAY

In November and December, 1899, agreements had been negotiated modifying the *condominium* in the Fiji Islands and effecting a partition between Germany, England, and the United States. In the same year, Germany purchased the Caroline Islands from Spain. England had accepted more readily than other Powers the nomination of Marshal von Waldersee to the command of the international expedition to Peking; and, in October, 1900, England and Germany had signed a Convention undertaking to respect the integrity of China and the "open door." These are the last fruits of the period of Anglo-German friendship. Within a few months, the China agreement became a bone of contention. Lord Lansdowne, who succeeded Lord Salisbury at the Foreign Office in November, 1900, regarded it as a barrier against Russia's advance into Manchuria. Count von Bülow, unwilling to quarrel with St. Petersburg, argued that the Convention related only to China proper. The grievance of Whitehall in this matter was forgotten with the conclusion of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance (January 30, 1902); a cause of difference that arose simultaneously—the Mesopotamian railway project—continues to this day.

The "pacific penetration" of the Turkish territories by German traders and financiers had been proceeding actively for a decade when the Emperor gave the process the stimulus and advertisement of his visit to Jerusalem. At every step, banks, shipping companies, and commercial houses were prompted, guided, and supported by their Government. The Ambassador at Constantinople—first Count Hatzfeldt, then Baron Marschall von Bieberstein—was always at their service, always alert to gain some

national advantage. Englishmen watched the campaign with astonishment deepening to disgust. British influence had long been supreme in Turkey; but the tradition of official aloofness from mere matters of trade was deeply rooted in the national individualism and the aristocratic character of the governing class. The British Ambassador was a titled person of good family whose business was to entertain passing travellers of his own social standing, and to watch the rivalries of Russia and Austria, the feuds of the lesser States, and the dealings of the Pashas with the Christian subject races. That Ministers who eschewed delights and lived laborious days in the unselfish hope of reforming the Macedonian vilayets should be outwitted by emissaries from Berlin cynically careless of all these high concerns appeared an incredible outrage. The latter were, indeed, educated and accomplished men: that only aggravated their offence. They were not "playing the game," as the British exponents understood it; for instance, they did not make any hard and fast line between the diplomatic and consular services, and they were hopelessly strenuous and materialistic. America displayed the same super-vitality, but had generally the grace to send out distinguished literary men to her chief embassies. Familiar political differences were lost here, for, while Conservatives wondered whether General von der Goltz was to gather in the harvest sown by Disraeli, Liberals saw a patronage growing up on the Golden Horn more subtly poisonous than that by which the "Sick Man" had hitherto maintained himself.

Morier and his like had preached in vain: very few Englishmen knew anything of the better side of the German bureaucracy, its hard training, its honest if

narrow spirit ; very few knew enough of German history to understand the long dependence of the people on patriarchal leadership, or the causes of the realism of recent years. England has grown wealthy by skill in wholesale production ; she gained her hold upon the markets of the world in days when goods sold themselves because there was little or no competition. It has remained for an economist of the present year to point out the significance of the fact that more effort has now to be expended in marketing goods than in making them. Many men were, and some still are, too prejudiced to recognize that Germans have developed the art of commercial travelling not from any meanness of soul, but because education and intelligence, a scientific examination of the conditions, led them to see that in the art of salesmanship, even more than in syndicated production, lay the greatest possibilities of profit in our time. The Englishman saw only an Ambassador turned tout, and an Emperor turned advertisement agent. It hardly occurred to him that a nation of fifty million souls, abounding with new life and pride, must find outlets in some direction, and that, if not here, the pressure might be felt in a less convenient place. He thought little of the intrinsic merits of the railway schemes, irrigation schemes, colonization schemes, shipping services, which appeared so many evidences of a dire conspiracy to impound in advance the heritage of the Turk.

The Bagdad railway concession was granted by Abdul Hamid, in 1899, to the "Imperial Ottoman Bagdad Railway Company," a child of the German Anatolian Railway Company, constituted ten years before to link Haidar Pasha with Angora and Konia. The purpose was to continue this line down the Tigris valley through

Bagdad to Bassorah on the Persian Gulf. The original capital was wholly German, supported only by a "kilometric guarantee," that is a payment per section contributed by the Turkish Government. It appeared that the adventure was too considerable to be borne unaided by the German bankers, hard hit by the commercial crisis of 1901; and the Company proposed the formation of a new syndicate in which Germany, France, and England would each hold a quarter of the stock, and the Anatolian Company the remaining quarter. France was well disposed; but England and Russia raised strong opposition. / Russia had too long contemplated the possibilities of a descent upon Armenia and Persia to stand by calmly while an iron road was cut on their borders by a rival Power. The British Foreign Office, always obsessed by the need of protecting the route to India, imagined the German Army staff, with the fighting power of Turkey behind them, ensconced at the head of the Persian Gulf, and thence descending upon Bombay with the aid of the great steamers of the Norddeutscher Lloyd and Hamburg East African lines. England had long claimed police powers in the Gulf, and a *de facto* protectorate, subject to Turkey suzerainty, over Koweit, where the railway should end; and, when the Sultan proposed to land troops to suppress two quarrelsome chiefs, she sent cruisers down, and compelled the Porte to agree that Koweit should never be alienated to another Power.

The definite concession for the line, guaranteeing interest at the rate of £700 a year per kilometre, was granted by firman of March 5, 1903, to Herr Gwinner of the Deutsche Bank, and Herren Zander and Huguenin representing the Anatolian Company. M. Delcassé had withdrawn French official approval, in face of the British

and Russian objections; and, in 1904, France and England crippled the Company by refusing to agree to the modification of the Turkish Customs Tariff so as to secure the continuance of the subsidies. While the rails were slowly creeping toward the Taurus, the Russian and British Governments, by their momentous agreement of August 31, 1907, partitioned Persia into spheres of commercial interest, and proceeded to plan a Trans-Persian railway, connecting through Batoum with Central Europe, and through Charbar with India. This project appeared to defy all the traditions of Indian defence. If it was ever regarded as a rival to the Bagdad line, however, the British Government must have been disillusioned when it heard, during the Agadir crisis, in August, 1911, that their good friend, Nicholas II, had signed with William II an agreement by which Russia withdrew her objections to the Mesopotamian railway, and provided for its connection, through Kanikin, with the projected North Persian lines, Germany undertaking not to compete with Russia in Central Asia. In March, 1911, the German Government had made a new compact with the Porte, by which it renounced the right to certain subsidies and the right of constructing the Gulf or terminal section of the Bagdad line and possessing a port there, stipulating, however, for equal participation in the new concession with any Power other than Turkey, and an indemnity from the new company. In compensation, it received concessions for the port of Alexandretta and a branch to join the Bagdad railway at Osmanieh. The British and Turkish Governments have since been in negotiation with regard to the Gulf Section, England proposing in August, 1911, an equal participation of Turkey, Germany, France, England, and Russia, and on

this condition agreeing to a new increase (from 11 to 14 per cent. *ad valorem*) of the Turkish customs dues.

This long quarrel has delayed the recovery and common exploitation of regions neglected for centuries, but once of immense fertility, the home of the earliest civilization, and in part world-famous as "the Garden of Eden."¹ It has never been limited to the merits of the case; and it would have been settled speedily with goodwill. The opponents have gained nothing, and have lost much. Neither of them can pretend to have acted on any high principle. Both have claimed to be the best friend of Turkey, a position implying independence and watchfulness of Russia; and both of them have courted Russia, at the cost of Turkey, to spite each other. The original Anatolian railway was built by a British company, which was induced to transfer it to a German group because it was hoped to use German enterprise as a barrier against Russia's advance in Asia Minor. When Germany became, in turn, the national foe, England began to play the dog in the manger. The Anglo-Russian Entente was regarded by Turkey as marking the definite end of the old British friendship. Germany then offered a loan which England and France had refused. So strong had her position become that, when the early promise of the Young Turk régime had been broken, she could afford to

¹ Sir W. M. Ramsay has published (in the *Manchester Guardian*) figures showing that, on the Anatolian railway from the Bosphorus to Eski-Sheher (319 kilometres) and Angora (578 kilometres), the old costs of camel-transport were brought down to a quarter, while crops have increased three-fold in the districts tapped, and the Turkish Government has benefited financially. He concludes that the Bagdad line "is one of the great civilizing works of the present time, and deserves the attention and sympathy of every historian and every person interested in modern progress."

ement openly flouting
 join the Tsar in the Potsdam Agr, general result of the
 the Sultan's sovereignty. The dispute is that Russia,
 prolongation of the Anglo-German, her accomplice in Per-
 having bound down England as ally in Berlin in prepara-
 sia, has gone over to her natural ally to divide the spoil of the
 tion for the day when they can be of manœuvres, the
 Ottoman Empire. In such a seri, and it has not even
 more liberal State inevitably loses, in a worthy cause.
 the consolation of losing generously

IV. COMMERCIAL AND NAVAL RIVALRY

usy that gave such
 What were the roots of the jealousy, on the part of
 fruit as this? Fear, of course. Competition, both in
 England, of an unprecedented competition, both in
 commerce and armaments. On the part of Germany,
 fear of a kindred race, an old friend turned enemy, one
 not content with possessing a quarter of the land-surface,
 of the globe, but claiming also to be "mistress of the seas,"
 and holding the power at any moment to sweep away
 every German ship, and to seize every German colony.
 The fear of an old State, its nerves shaken by the strain
 of a petty expedition grown into a first-class war; the
 fear of a young State, instably constituted, politically ill-
 equipped, trying its new strength in a new, unwonted field.

A pitiful spectacle, history will call it. It was in the middle of the eighties. The German
 competition began to be felt as reports came from
 drummer was suddenly ubiquitous; it

far and wide of his successes, generally attributed to his more serious study of the market, his ceaseless efforts to satisfy the taste of customers, his readiness to give credit. He was not the only competitor. The United States had become a great exporting country, but was less felt than Germany in the sale of manufactured goods. They were alike in endeavouring, unsuccessfully be it said, to close their home markets by hostile tariffs. Partly for these reasons, partly for others, the value figures of British export trade showed hardly any advance from 1885 to 1900. In the first year they stood at £213,000,000, in 1890 at £263,000,000; in 1894 they fell back to £216,000,000; and in 1901 they recovered to £271,000,000 (none of these sums includes the substantial value of exported ships and ship machinery). This stagnation was all the more annoying because of the immense efforts and sacrifices made during the same period in "pegging out claims," by which, in fifteen years, the population of the British Empire had risen from 300 to 450 millions, and its area from eight to twelve million square miles. Germany and the United States, on the other hand, had been colonizing at home. In the thirty years following the Franco-German war the population of the United Kingdom increased by 10 millions, that of the German Empire by 15 millions, that of the United States by 37 millions. Comparing the average exports of domestic produce (ships excluded) between 1880-84 and 1896-1900, we find that the British values increased by 6.4, the German by 23.1, and the United States by 42.8 per cent. In manufactured goods, the record of the United Kingdom was almost stationary, while that of Germany increased by 36, and that of the United States by 154 per cent. Great Britain remained easily first; but the others were rapidly

approaching her. The Board of Trade¹ foretold that "if peace is maintained, both Germany and the United States, and to some extent France also, are certain to increase their rate of upward movement."

We can now look back calmly upon the alarms of this period, and apply a more scientific measurement, as well as a lengthier test, to the trade figures. Doing so, we shall find that the pessimists were supported by several purely statistical errors, failure to allow properly for the effect of the fall of prices in the 'seventies, for the fall in the Indian exchange, and for dislocations and depression to which all countries were subject, being the chief of these. Great Britain and the United States had reaped a large harvest during the Franco-German war. It was to be expected that Germany would make rapid strides thereafter. She made this recovery most easily in the surrounding markets, and there England suffered. In more distant markets, where there was a more equal opportunity, nothing of the kind happened, though Germany, with her much larger population, continued to progress rapidly. The "Made in Germany" agitation died down as German goods improved in quality; the later agitation against "dumping" died down as it was found that, if artificially cheap goods injured some, they benefited others. The last decade has witnessed a prodigious expansion of British oversea business; it was, indeed, the persistent refusal of the export figures to justify the cry of the alarmists, more than any other factor, that killed Mr. Chamberlain's Protectionist

¹ See, especially, Sir Courtney Boyle and Sir A. E. Batemen in two valuable Bluebooks: *Memorandum on British and Foreign Trade*, 1897; ditto, 1902. Also, for this period, three analytical articles by A. W. Flux, *Economic Journal*, September and December, 1894, March 1897.

crusade. The following tables show the comparative position in recent years :—

EXPORTS (Domestic produce), Average, in £ millions sterling.

To	FROM GERMANY.			FROM GREAT BRITAIN.		
	1899-1903.	1904-1908.	Increase.	1899-1903.	1904-1908.	Increase.
European Countries	173	224	51	108	132	24
Non-European Foreign Countries	43	65	22	75	111	36
British Possessions	9	11	2	99	118	19
	225	300	75	282	361	79

In the above table, Hong-Kong is counted with "non-European foreign countries," not with British possessions. The figures show the superior importance of the foreign over the colonial trade of the United Kingdom.

FOREIGN TRADE, in £ millions.

	GERMANY.			UNITED KINGDOM.		
	Imports.	Exports.	Total.	Imports.	Exports.	Total.
1905	372	293	665	565	330	895
1906	422	324	746	608	375	983
1907	450	355	805	646	426	1,072
1908	404	324	728	593	377	970
1909	426	329	755	625	378	1,003
1910	430	373	803	678	430	1,108
1911	469	398	867	680	454	1,134
Increase						
1905-11	97	105	202	115.	124	239

The following comparison is limited to wholly or mainly manufactured goods, and enables allowance to be made for the difference of the three national populations :

MANUFACTURES (in £ millions, and per head of Population)

	Imports*	Exports.	Exports per Head.
			£ s. d.
United Kingdom . 1903	116	234	5 10 6
" " . 1910	129	343	7 10 11
Germany . . . 1903	59	161	2 14 10
" . . . 1910	89	244	3 15 2
United States . . 1903	94	97	1 4 3
" " . . 1910	136	160	1 15 7

The three last tables fail to do full justice to the commercial position of the United Kingdom in two respects. In the first place, the exports recorded are those of domestic produce only. But England does, also, an immense depôt trade, her re-exports amounting to £103,761,000 in 1910, and to about a quarter of the domestic exports throughout the period. Secondly, she holds her supreme position in shipping business ; and a very large proportion of the increased overseas trade of Germany and the United States has been carried in British bottoms.

Briefly, we may say that, if there was any real decadence in British trade, the alarm of the 'eighties and 'nineties helped to produce a remarkable revival. Germany and England continue to be each the other's best customer ; and the competition which continues, and will continue, between them is a healthy stimulus to both in providing for their common needs and those of the world.

A very different expression of rivalry lay and lies in the parallel growth of the two navies. We have sufficiently traced the origin and course of the idea of mari-

time power in the German Emperor's mind. It had there an essentially British character, arose from British traits, was strengthened by the observation of British examples, and was voiced in the hyperbolic rhetoric well known on Navy League platforms. No doubt, other elements entered into the calculations of Germans of a different type. The Junker detested England as a successful model of a polity based on parliamentarism, free trade, and a voluntary army. The great military contractors and shipbuilders wanted another field of profit.¹ Ready pens pointed the moral of recent wars, especially the American-Spanish and the Russo-Japanese conflicts. The Boers had once been Low Germans; their conquest added fuel to the fire. A natural jealousy counted for much. Against the magnificent spread of British possessions, including nearly a quarter of the population of the earth, Germany had a few scattered colonies with, in 1898, a purchasing power of a little more than a million pounds. Five years later this record had improved; but Government services and railways cost £1,500,000; and, apart from soldiers and officials, the whole German population did not number four thousand. No new possessions were gained for ten years; and, in 1910, with an area of a million square miles, and a total population of 14,546,000, there were only 20,074 white inhabitants, and the total exchange of trade, exports and imports, between fatherland and colonies, amounted to only four million pounds sterling.

But the steady mass of feeling upon which the German navy has been built up is closely similar to that by which

¹ According to the *Deutsche Tageszeitung* (March 19, 1910), the Ministry of Marine employed on November 1, 1908, 23,908 workmen, chiefly in Government-shipyards. Private contractors employed a much larger number.

the construction of the modern British navy has been supported. "Trade follows the flag"; coasts, shipping services, and colonies must be protected; no war would be limited in the twentieth century, as was that of 1870, to the land; without a powerful fleet to throw into the scale of the argument, diplomacy is crippled; *si vis pacem, para bellum*—the same ideas, often the same phrases, are expended by writers and speakers of the same kind to the same kind of audiences in the two countries. Previously, during the acute hostility of the 'eighties, these same ideas and phrases had been directed at each other by France and England. As soon as Germany took France's place, Germany must take over the language of the feud. Even in the subsidiary arguments, there is a curious balance. The Englishman points out that his insular position renders him liable to starvation directly he loses "command of the sea." The German replies by expounding the dangers of his position between France and Russia—naval as well as military allies—and the impossibility of his claiming a "two-Power standard" against them, even when supported by his own allies. The Englishman remarks upon the immensely larger size of his mercantile marine, which needs protection. The German replies that England alone has stood in the way of a rule exempting private commerce from attack in time of war.

Thus the even argument proceeds, and with it the tale of millions spent in the constant elaboration of this major instrument of *Welt-politik*. The German side of the rivalry shows, as might be expected, the greater regard for a steadily-pursued plan; the British side, for the maintenance of Parliamentary control. The first modern German programme, proposed in November,

1897, was to ripen only in 1904, the dates of the completion of each ship and of its replacement being specified. The Bill was opposed by Socialists and Radicals ; but it passed easily. For seven years, the Reichstag could not claim to reduce the expenditure ; but it was soon given an opportunity of increasing it. In January, 1900, a new Bill, superseding the previous enactment, provided for the creation of an establishment of thirty-eight battleships, fourteen large and thirty-eight small cruisers, and ninety-six destroyers, while submarines were to be built out of special votes. The Reichstag had struck out of the list thirteen additional cruisers, the Government agreeing on the understanding that they should be proposed again at a later date. In 1904, along with the Anglo-French Entente, came Lord Fisher's great act of naval reconstruction and redistribution.

In the preceding ten years, British naval expenditure had been increased from £19,500,000 a year to £37,000,000 (without naval works), although the Russian fleet had been destroyed, and peace had been made with France. It was now decided to completely renovate the fleet, and to concentrate it chiefly upon the North Sea.¹ The North and South-East American stations (seventeen vessels) were abolished, an Atlantic fleet of eight battleships, withdrawn from the Mediterranean, being established instead. Schemes of naval works in distant stations were torn up. A fresh and shorter estimate of the effective life of warships was adopted, which condemned most of the vessels then recently built as worthless. In twenty years, £450,000,000 had been spent upon ships most of which were now dismissed to the scrap-heap. The whole existing classes of "protected" and "unpro-

¹ Memorandum appended to Naval Estimates of 1904-5.

tected " cruisers were condemned as practically useless, except for " police " purposes—115 vessels, of which thirty-four were only five years old. This " spring cleaning " and the connected redistribution were generally applauded, few observers realizing, that they implied a new period of more aggravated competition. On October 2, 1905, the world was presented with a new model and standard, the *Dreadnought* being laid down, to be finished in December, 1906. At a stroke, large classes of iron-clads and cruisers recently built were again rendered practically obsolete.

Germany followed suit with amendments of the Navy Law, in 1906, increasing the number of large cruisers by six, and, in 1908, shortening the life of battleships from twenty-five to twenty years, and so making it necessary to build an additional three battleships and one battle cruiser yearly till 1911, and thereafter two large ships yearly till 1917. The strain of temper accompanying these measures was illustrated when, in March, 1908, the Military Correspondent of the *Times* announced that the German Emperor had been corresponding privately with Lord Tweedmouth, then First Lord of the Admiralty, apparently with the hope of influencing the British Minister in the interest of Germany. Lord Tweedmouth¹ admitted that he had received on February 18, by ordinary post, a " private and personal " letter from the Kaiser. " It was very friendly in its tone, and quite informal ; " and Sir Edward Grey, the Foreign Secretary, had agreed that it should be regarded as a private communication. Prince Bülow explained in the Reichstag² that the letter could be signed " by every sincere friend of good relations

¹ House of Lords, March 10, 1908.

² March 24, 1908.

between Germany and England," and that "it was a distortion of the facts, justified by nothing, to assert that His Majesty's letter was an attempt to influence the Minister responsible for the British Naval Estimates." "We wish," he added, "to live in quiet and peace with England, and therefore we feel it bitterly when a section of English publicists again speaks of the German danger. Though the British fleet several times outnumbers ours, and though other countries possess stronger fleets than ours, and work with no less zeal at the building up of their fleets—in spite of this, it is Germany, always Germany, against whom public opinion in England is incited by reckless and malicious polemic. It would be in the interests of appeasement between the two countries, and, therefore, in the interests of universal appeasement, if this polemic were to cease. Just as we do not dispute England's right to adopt for her fleet that standard which she deems necessary for the maintenance of the British world-empire, so no one can take it ill of us when we do not desire that our naval constructions shall be regarded as a challenge to England." But the most appropriate comment came from Lord Rosebery, who remarked, during the House of Lords debate, that the "absolutely insane inferences" which had been drawn from this private correspondence were calculated to make England look ridiculous in the eyes of the world.

The publication of the *Daily Telegraph* interview, a few months later, did not mend matters. Not only did the British Estimates show a rapid increase; those of March, 1909, were the occasion of a series of sensational speeches by responsible statesmen—Mr. M'Kenna (Lord Tweedmouth's successor), Mr. Asquith, Sir Edward Grey, and Mr. Balfour—based on reports of a secret acceleration

of the German programme, and on calculations which, although since disproved, have left a sediment of alarm in one country and annoyance in the other. Meanwhile, the *Dreadnought* has given place to the *Invincible* or super-Dreadnought; and both nations are steadily advancing toward a climax which one of the most conservative of the world's statesmen, Sir Edward Grey, has thus indicated¹: "The paradox is that the expenditure on armaments is not directed against the most backward nations; it is, I will not say directed against, but it is entered upon by nations in rivalry with each other. Unless the incongruity and mischief are brought home, not only to men's heads generally, but to their feelings, so that they resent the inconsistency and realize the danger of it—if this tremendous expenditure on armaments goes on, it must in the long run break down civilization. There are those who think it will lead to war, because it is becoming intolerable. I think it is much more likely that the burden will be dissipated by internal revolution—not by nations fighting against each other, but by the revolt of masses of men against taxation."

The best brief measure both of the sacrifice and the relative power it yields lies in the following figures of recent naval expenditure, which, however, on the British side, include neither the cost of naval works, nor Colonial contributions. The slackening on the British side in 1906 is, in part, only apparent, as, in that and the two following years, there were heavy expenditures out of loans. It is in part real. On the German side, however, there is no slackening; on the contrary there is, after 1907, a more rapid rise. This represents the reply to two

¹ House of Commons, March 13, 1911.

NAVAL EXPENDITURE IN £ millions.

	UNITED KINGDOM.		GERMANY.	
	Total, net.	New Construction.	Total.	New Construction.
1901-2	30.9	10.3	9.5	4.6
1902-3	31.	9.7	10.	4.6
1903-4	35.7	12.3	10.4	4.4
1904-5	36.8	13.1	10.1	4.3
1905-6	33.1	11.3	11.3	4.7
1906-7	31.4	10.4	12.	5.1
1907-8	31.2	8.8	14.2	5.9
1908-9	32.1	8.5	16.5	7.8
1909-10	35.7	11.	19.7	10.1
1910-11	40.6	14.9	21.2	11.4
1911-12	44.4	15.0*	22.4	11.5*
		* Estimated.		
In 11 years about	£383,000,000	126,000,000	158,000,000	75,000,000

factors, one naval and the other political. The naval factor, the new standard set by the *Dreadnought*, has already been referred to. To the political factor we must now turn.

V. KING EDWARD.—"ENCIRCLEMENT"

Queen Victoria died on January 22, 1901; and Edward VII proclaimed himself "fully determined to be a Constitutional Sovereign in the strictest sense of the word." In the following August, his sister, the Empress Frederick, died. The South African War had yet to be ended; and

a somewhat serious illness of the king delayed the Coronation till August, 1902. It was, therefore, not till May, 1903, that King Edward was able to pay his first official visit to Paris. Within a year, the most momentous international agreement of recent times, the Anglo-French "Entente," was concluded.

Many influences conspired to bring about this revolutionary change in the relations of the great European States. France had composed her differences with Italy ; and the isolation of England had become more marked than ever. Many Englishmen asked themselves whether this situation could continue. Even in 1896, Sir Charles Dilke, perhaps the most competent unofficial observer of foreign affairs, had written : " The unpopularity of our country is too complete, the jealousy of our success in the world too strong, and the number of points at which we come into conflict with other Powers too great to make it possible for us to rely upon the justice of our cause, even supposing that we are sure that it is likely always to be the just one. We spend more upon our defence than does any other Power in the world ; but, if we fail at present to secure adequate defence against a fairly possible hostile combination, our enormous expenditure upon this head is virtually thrown away." The hostile combination which Sir Charles Dilke thought " fairly possible " was that of Russia and France under the leadership of Germany. Like other sober politicians, he believed the then expenditure on armaments to be a social menace, and a reconciliation with France to be the natural way of ending an evil which hostility to France had created. The first Hague Conference had greatly strengthened in both countries the feeling in favour of the pacific settlement of disputes. The Dreyfus case was forgotten on

one side, the South African War on the other. The recent stability of the Republic drew to it the sympathies of an increasing number of progressive Englishmen. The British refusal to aid the Bagdad railway, and the German Navy Law of 1900, marked the opening of a gulf between the United Kingdom and the chief partner in the Triple Alliance. To these major factors may be added the personal influence of King Edward.

Much time may have to pass ere we know fully the facts of the relations of the two sovereigns, of whom the elder was the son of a German prince, and the younger the son of an English princess, and of their several relations to the Anglo-German problem. In face of certain obvious exaggerations of King Edward's rôle, there has been a tendency on the part of constitutional and official writers to underestimate it. "The foreign press and public," says Sir Sidney Lee, in the *Dictionary of National Biography*, "often made the error of assuming that, in his frequent interviews with foreign rulers and statesmen, he was personally working out a diplomatic policy of his own devising. Foreign statesmen and rulers knew that no subtler aim really underlay his movements than a wish for friendly social intercourse with them, and the enjoyment of life under foreign skies, quite unencumbered by the burden of diplomatic anxieties." For any who realize the interest of the contrast of these two characters, uncle and nephew, heads of the two leading modern empires, this is altogether too official an "explanation."

It needs no pretence of divine right, no claim of arbitrary power, and no breach of the unwritten constitution which King Edward promised scrupulously to regard, to give a capable English sovereign a considerable influence

upon events. The weakness and the strength of the whole fabric of British Government, from the throne to the chair of the Parish Council, lie in its looseness or elasticity, which, for good or evil, permits a wide play to personal talent. Men in power are watched jealously by their colleagues and their constituents; but if, by ability or character, they win an exceptional confidence, a wide interpretation of their formal functions will be allowed. Thus, in his early Radical days, Mr. Chamberlain made himself something like a dictator in the municipal life of Birmingham; thus masterfully, Mr. Gladstone managed his Cabinet; and thus Queen Victoria and King Edward successively exercised, especially in foreign affairs, an influence never attempted by a British sovereign since the constitutional system was established under William III. The Crown is no longer a sacred object, even in England; but it is entrenched in a powerful social class, and for thousands of ordinary men and women it represents, as the party statesmen cannot, an ideal of national unity, and, as an elected President could not, an ideal of historic continuity, and the slow experimental modification of old things which is the Englishman's conception of progress. A faint trace of the belief in the quasi-divinity of kings is mixed with the newer use of the Crown as a symbol of unity in an Empire which needs such a symbol all the more because it has no natural homogeneity, and is bound together by only the frailest of ties. On the other hand, the functions of royalty in England are hedged about by a thousand restrictions. The jealousy of royal initiative is an instinct deeply rooted in tradition. A clear distinction familiar to lawyers, Ministers, and influential publicists, though not to the "man in the street," is maintained between the Crown, an impersonal

entity, most of whose prerogatives are exercised by the Prime Minister, and the sovereign as an individual. The formal powers of the Crown are narrowly defined and sternly limited ; but beyond these bounds there are wide possibilities of personal activity. In one of his remarkable letters to the Prince Consort in 1854, Baron Stockmar expressed alarm at the prevalent belief that " the King, in the view of the law, is nothing but a mandarin figure which has to nod its head in assent, or shake it in denial, as his Minister pleases." So it is within the sphere of formal rights and powers ; but two capable and experienced sovereigns discovered paths of informal influence which led to great results, and yet were compatible with the basic reality of democratic government.

When King Edward came to the throne, he was still under the shadow of the great prestige of Queen Victoria. He had served an inordinately long apprenticeship, and already knew his regular business. The advent of a King to a long desolate Court was generally welcome ; but the Prince's sporting proclivities and a certain laxity in his private circle were subjects of much suspicion and fear. King Edward quickly overcame these and graver difficulties by the proof he gave of a superlative tact, a combination of charm and dignity, and a kindly humanism which brought him into touch with all sorts and conditions of men. Without any strong intellectual equipment, he had a keen, almost unerring judgment, a saving lack of prejudice, an open intelligence, and a happy gift of appreciation. This was the base of the popularity and confidence he won, in his last years even in Berlin. The spirit of the time helped him. He embodied the two national qualities of " good nature " and " common-sense," and the national gift for " practical politics."

It is known that there was some occasional friction between the two sovereigns ; but there is no reason to doubt the sincerity of the compliments they paid each other. There is much in the Kaiser's character which appeals strongly to Englishmen ; there is also a margin which puzzles them. The Kaiser had once sent to Mr. Kruger a sympathetic telegram ; he had then, by his own account, composed a plan of campaign against him ; finally, he had refused to receive him in Berlin. We may contrast with these facts a saying attributed to King Edward by a French acquaintance : " The Boer is a gentleman, and must be treated as a gentleman." It was more than a difference of personal temper. King Edward's reign exhibited a chastened national mind, a return to democratic health after an orgie of imperialism, a revival of the cosmopolitan spirit long in eclipse. Unfortunately, this liberal transformation coincided with the masterful appearance of the new materialistic Germany in world-politics. There is no reason to doubt the sincerity of the frequent declarations of both sovereigns in favour of peace among the nations. But these pious hopes have given so little fruit as to suggest that there was something each ruler wanted more earnestly than a constructive peace.

On the eve of the Conference of 1899, Mr. Goschen had announced ¹ that " if the other great Naval Powers should be prepared to diminish their programmes of shipbuilding, we should be prepared, on our side, to meet such a procedure by modifying ours." The reply of the German Government was given in the scornful speech of their delegate, Colonel von Schwarzhoff, already quoted (*ante* p. 336), and in the preamble of the Navy Law of 1900, which thus

¹ House of Commons, March 9, 1899.

described its purpose : " For the protection of its maritime trade and colonies, Germany must possess a battle-fleet of such strength as would make a war dangerous enough, even for the most powerful naval adversary, to endanger its predominance." This is the classic statement of the quasi-Bismarckism of the reign of William II. There is a naïvety in the public advertisement of the purpose which distinguishes it clearly from the true Bismarckian method. Nevertheless, King Edward may have thought of the day in the Palace at Berlin when he wished he could throw Count Herbert out of the room. A man of genius, a Gladstone, perhaps a Cromwell, might now have risked all upon an act of faith. There is nothing unreasonable *per se* in the demand of the rulers of an empire of sixty million souls that they shall be allowed effectively to protect their trade and possessions, and effectively to participate in diplomatic business. It is, as we have seen, an English argument turned against England ; and it is expressly associated with a disavowal of any intention to build a navy equal to that of Great Britain.¹ There being no man of genius to grapple with the problem, the men of ordinary talent to whom this duty fell may have stayed for a moment (it is not certain) to ask whether there was any guarantee that an Emperor assured of his divine right, and a bureaucracy penetrated with the Bismarckian tradition, would stop at the limits of this reasonable intention. It is in such emergencies that the imponderable forces of attraction or repulsion, which work upon societies as upon individuals, become decisive.

¹ " The idea which came to expression in the Navy Law, the *raison d'être* of our navy, is to create a fleet which is not the strongest, which, therefore, cannot be aggressive, for a fleet which is not the strongest cannot be aggressive."—Grand Admiral von Tirpitz in the Reichstag, February 14, 1911.

Very few Germans and very few Englishmen are moved by feelings of positive hostility toward the other, but many tiny currents of suspicion, heated on either side by a sensational press, produce at length an atmosphere charged with fear and distrust, in which statesmen of small calibre drift from one mean expedient to another.

Thus, the great territorial and arbitral arrangement which in April, 1904, disposed of the many differences between France and England, an arrangement conceived in the minds of its most active and liberal advocates as an example presently to be followed with Germany as well as Russia, was turned into an exclusive partnership which not only, in Lord Rosebery's words, involved England in "the unwritten liabilities of the Continental system," but committed her to a partizan attitude at any point in the world where Germany sought to obtain a "place in the sun." Momentarily, the Entente was accepted for what, among its unofficial supporters, it was; Prince Bülow spoke of it as natural and inoffensive, and an Anglo-German Arbitration Treaty was negotiated, as one of the series of such engagements, on July 12, 1904. Then it slowly and gradually began to appear that, in exchanging British "rights" in Morocco and Madagascar for French "rights" in Egypt and Newfoundland, the two partners had also been trafficking in the "rights" of third parties, Germany in particular. At the close of the period of Anglo-German friendship, England had been prepared to see Germany install herself in Morocco.¹ But

¹ It was not true, said Herr von Kiderlen-Waechter before the Budget Commission of the Reichstag, on November 17, 1911, that portions of Morocco were offered to Germany in 1899. "The British Minister of the Colonies, Mr. Chamberlain, had certainly at that time had views of partition in regard to Morocco. England was to receive Tangier, Germany a port on the Atlantic coast. It

to get a firm hold of North-West Africa was precisely the main object of the French Foreign Office in negotiating the Entente. England and Spain were rival claimants ; Germany was not yet an active claimant only because the Bismarckian view that France should be allowed to entangle herself in that region was not yet fully abandoned in Berlin. With Spain, M. Delcassé had already been in conflict. In 1902 a secret treaty (only revealed ten years later) was negotiated, without the knowledge of England ; but at the last moment Spain refused to ratify it. News of this episode came, a little later, to the ears of the London Government ; and fear of a Franco-Spanish partition of Morocco without any consideration for England was one of the factors that led to the Anglo-French bargain of 1904. It is now known that the latter treaty contained five secret clauses¹ contemplating the break-up of the Shereefian Empire, and securing a share of the prospective loot to Spain. This purpose was confirmed in three secret Franco-Spanish treaties (also revealed casually in 1911), in 1904, 1905, and 1906.

Germany was being left out in the cold. Early in 1905, her Minister to the Moorish Court threw out signals of alarm to the Wilhelmstrasse ; and, in March, the Emperor landed from his yacht at Tangier, remarked that the Sultan was an independent sovereign, and gave notice that German interests would be safeguarded. After the recent love-making of the Entente, this appeared a scandalous interruption, a more than scandalous encouragement of native races (" half devil and half child," as Mr.

had, however, never come to formal negotiations." Translation of the speech in British White Paper, Morocco, No. 2 of 1911, Cd. 5992.

¹ They were published for the first time, in Paris and London, on November 24, 1911, during the Agadir crisis (Cd. 5969).

Kipling had amiably sung) to resent the incoming of civilization. It is not for nothing that a modern empire maintains a gigantic army, and adds to it a large navy. Within a few months, France was faced with the alternative of war or an International Conference. M. Delcassé—whose friendship for England was of recent growth, for whom, to be plain, England was a substitute for Russia, now crippled by the defeats in Manchuria—would have chosen war. "Certain information he had received from London," he told the French Cabinet, "permitted him to envisage the possibility of signing a military agreement with England. Such an agreement would guarantee the two nations against all the menaces of Germany." M. Rouvier, the Premier, replied that "a military agreement signed at this moment with England would kindle an immediate conflagration." The Foreign Minister stuck to his point that "we must not recoil from the possibility of war," even when M. Bertaux reported that the army was utterly unprepared.¹ The Ministers were unanimously against him; and M. Delcassé resigned. Rumour absurdly attributed his fall to a personal intervention of the Emperor. The German success was marked by the elevation of Count Bülow to the rank of Prince.

It was a short-lived triumph. At what exact point King Edward and the British Foreign Office began to confuse the idea of real peace-making with the idea of making a new balance of power, it would be difficult to say. Not unnaturally, however, the Entente, the flirtations with Italy that followed, the old alliance with Portugal, royal relationships with Spain, Norway, Denmark, and Greece—making a sort of bond between the whole of

¹ M. Gaston Calmette in the *Paris Figaro*, March 3, 1911.

the maritime Powers of Western and Southern Europe—was translated in the German mind as a process of “encirclement.” At the Algeciras Conference, in January, 1906, Austria and Italy proved lukewarm allies, and the United States generally supported the grant to France and Spain of a European mandate and a predominant interest, subject to the nominal independence of the Moorish Government. On August 31, 1907, Russia and England concluded the agreement by which their frontier relations in Central Asia were regulated, and Persia was divided into Russian, neutral, and British spheres of commercial influence. At the second Hague Conference, during the autumn, the British proposal to consider a concerted arrest of armaments was politely shelved, the German delegate, Baron Marschall von Bieberstein refusing to discuss it. In June, 1908, the meeting of King Edward and the Tsar at Reval marked the development of an Anglo-Russian Entente, which, however, differed from the Anglo-French friendship in having no popular character. It was now Germany, the modern exemplar of alliances and a military balance of power, that stood in “splendid isolation”; and it was in these circumstances that the Emperor allowed his complaints of British unkindness to appear in the columns of a London newspaper. Two Great Powers only stood outside the London-Paris-St. Petersburg network, now extended by agreements of Russia and France with Japan, confirming the *status quo* in the Far East; and these two Powers proceeded to act for themselves.

21

The Young Turk revolution of July, 1908, appeared, at first sight, to overturn the position of special advantage which German Ministers, bankers, and traders had so long laboured to build up.* Austria at once proclaimed

the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, at the same time evacuating Novibazar, and supported Bulgaria in throwing off Turkish suzerainty. Europe remains very young in its capacity of indignation over acts like these, by which large parts of Europe have received their present constitution. England, genuinely anxious for the fate of a Government which seemed to offer the hope of a renovated and humanized Turkey, protested that international treaties could not be thus lightly cancelled, and demanded an international conference. Germany, however, stood, in the last stage peremptorily, beside her ally, while insisting that she had not been consulted in advance. After many months of barefaced intrigue between Austria and Russia, Italy, and France,¹ the British proposal was abandoned. With this significant fiasco, the old "Concert of Europe" may be said to have come to an end; and the major affairs of the Continent were left to rest upon an instable balance of the two great Alliances.

The crisis had brought Germany nearer both to Russia and France; and in February, 1909, a direct Franco-German treaty was concluded,² secretly and without England's knowledge, by which France consented to an economic co-operation of "nationals" of the two countries, and Germany recognized France's special political interest in Morocco. The British Government afterwards objected to proposed distributions of shares under the agreement; and a long contention ensued, Germany complaining that it had given no substantial results. The French expedition to Fez in May, 1911, which suggested

¹ Perris: *Our Foreign Policy*, ch. ii.

² British White Paper, *Morocco*, No. 4 of 1911.

³ Statements in the French Senate Committee, *Times*, December 28, 1911.

that Morocco was to be taken possession of as Tunis had been, brought the difference to a head. Both through private emissaries, and in conversations between the German Chancellor and Foreign Secretary and the French Ambassador in Berlin, the French Ministry mooted the possibility of "compensations," but failed to agree in defining them.¹ On June 30, the German Government precipitated matters by sending the cruiser *Panther* to the South Moroccan port, Agadir, at the same time issuing a Note to the Powers pointing out that the Fez expedition had destroyed the Act of Algeciras, and that, in view of Germany's "existing good relations" with France, direct negotiations would probably be the best way of reaching a final arrangement.

In Paris and London, where the public knew little or nothing of the chain of events just briefly traced, this demonstration passed without creating alarm; but, in a few days, Sir Edward Grey intervened as a principal in the negotiations, and a fever of excitement was created by press rumours that Germany was pressing France too hard. On July 21, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Lloyd George, at the Foreign Secretary's request, introduced in a speech at a meeting of London bankers a passage which was generally interpreted as showing that the rivals were now at length upon the brink of war. "If peace could only be preserved" by Britain surrendering her "great and beneficent position," and allowing herself to "be treated where her interests were vitally affected as if she were of no account in the Cabinet of nations, then

¹ "No positive proposals were forthcoming from France. Her answer always was that later on they would be glad to come to an understanding. Meanwhile, she established herself with ever-diminishing ceremoniousness."—Herr von Kiderlin-Waechter, in the Reichstag Committee, November 17, 1911.

I say emphatically that peace at that price would be a humiliation intolérable to endure." Yet once more the storm-clouds passed over ; British Ministers returned to their attack upon the veto of the House of Lords ; and on August 1, the groundwork of a Franco-German Treaty was laid. There was a mild renewal of the crisis and a mild navy scare in September ; but, on November 4, 1911, the compact was signed by which France received a free hand in Morocco, and, in return, ceded to Germany a substantial part of the French Congo. It was the first addition to German territory for ten years, and the first substantial Franco-German treaty since 1871.

Italy had already taken advantage of the confusion by invading Tripoli, an essay in "compensation" which Germans, Frenchmen, and Englishmen heartily united to reprobate.

Viewing this decade of antagonism, as we have done, with all the impartiality at our command, its hard reality becomes as plain as the ultimate impossibility of its peaceful continuance. Soft words will not cure it. Behind every new dispute, every new alarm, every new naval programme, there lies an obstinate rivalry of pride and power, in which the claims of either side seem to possess a like kind and not a very unlike degree of reasonableness. None disputes the peculiar vulnerability of an island State, and the special needs that arise therefrom. None should dispute to Germany a better "place in the sun," and an adequate influence in councils at present unhappily dominated by armed power. Yet the "protection" of one side is the "possible destruction" of the other. So far, the proposition appears insoluble, like the conundrum with which small boys used to be puzzled :

what happens when an irresistible force meets an immovable body? But societies are human by reason of their not being immovable; life is a perpetual solution of apparently insoluble problems by a change in their elements. A small change in the elements of this problem has already taken place: England has offered to discuss a concerted arrest of armaments, and has reduced her measure of naval strength from a Two-Power standard to one of sixty per cent. excess over the first competitor. Unfortunately, these concessions were overshadowed by the reconstruction of the French and Russian fleets, and the summoning of the British Colonies to take part in the array of forces.

We must look for another factor. "The great nations of the world," said Sir Edward Grey, in supporting President Taft's proposal of an obligatory Arbitration treaty, "are in bondage to their armies and navies; but it does not seem impossible that they may discover that, all the time they have been in bondage to this tremendous expenditure, the prison door has been locked on the inside." Each of these great nations is, in fact, prisoner of a certain conception of national safety and interest. Elsewhere, it may be asked whether the British people will now again give proof of its national qualities of "common-sense" and "good nature," its national gift for "practical politics;" by applying in another field the precedent of 1904. Here we must ask whether the German people show any perception of the truth of Sir Edward Grey's parable, and any inclination to take up the key, and liberate themselves.

CHAPTER. X

THE ECONOMIC REVOLUTION OF TO-DAY

I. THE PEOPLE AT WORK.

IT has become a commonplace to say that Germany, from an agricultural country almost mediævally fixed in its conditions, has become an industrial State of the first rank. And, indeed, no wealth of detailed illustration can do justice to the mass of effort of will and intelligence by which millions of men whose grandfathers or great-grandfathers were serfs have built up the industrial, agricultural, educational, and political organizations that are the real strength of the Empire to-day. There is abundant reason for German pride; only it is the common weakness of humanity often to take pride in the wrong things. If we have to dwell, in this chapter, rather upon certain elements of weakness than upon the many and great elements of strength in the social character and constitution of Germany, it is in no light or inappreciative spirit, but under the necessities of our inquiry. England and America have shared in the ill, as well as the good, of the industrial revolution; and no modern community has so large a balance of advantage in the process as to justify its throwing stones at any other. But there are differences, bearing upon the future, which it is important to understand. We shall seek, therefore, first a few of the most considerable symptoms of social change since the

Franco-German war, and then their causes and significance.

The inclusive factor is the increase and re-distribution of population. From 24 millions in 1816, and 31 millions in 1837, the population of the lands included in the Empire rose to 42 millions in 1875, and to 65 millions at the end of 1910. A million of these were foreign residents. In 1900, $4\frac{1}{4}$ millions, chiefly Poles, were returned as speaking only a foreign tongue; this number has fallen under pressure of compulsory schooling. The rate of increase of the total population averaged about 1 per cent. per annum till 1890, rose to $1\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. in 1900, and since then has slightly declined. The maximum of increase was due to improvements of public health resulting in a rapid reduction of the death-rate, which, however, is still high (17·2 per 1,000, against 14·6 in England), being swollen by heavy infant mortality. The slackening of the increase is due to a continuous fall of the birth-rate shared by Germany with other countries of advanced civilization. This is shown by the following table :

BIRTH-RATES PER 1,000 OF POPULATION

	1900.	1902.	1904.	1906.	1908.	1910.
Prussia	36·1	35·5	34·7	33·7	32·7	30·5
Saxony	38·1	35·8	33·8	31·9	29·8	27·2
Bavaria	36·8	36·9	35·9	34·5	33·6	31·5
Total Empire	35·6	35·1	34·1	33·1	32·	—
United Kingdom	28·2	28·	27·7	27·	26·6	25·
France	21·4	21·7	21·	20·6	20·2	19·7

In cities the fall is more considerable still : on an average of towns including over a third of the people of the Empire, the birth-rate declined from 33·6 in 1900 to

26·8 in 1910 ; and the rate of “ natural increase ” shows a steady decline. A generation ago, the alarm was at the prospect of over-population ; now the cry is reversed. The explanation is the same as is offered in other lands—the desire for a higher standard of life. How important a factor, in this connection, is the age-constitution of a society may be gathered from a comparison of the state of the German Empire and England and Wales ten years ago.¹ Taking a million persons of all ages in either country, we find them thus divided :

	Germany.		England.
Young (1-15 years) and Old (over 55)	461,994	..	430,608
Adults (15-55)	538,006	..	569,392

The German population was much the less “ adult ” of the two ; in other words, a smaller number of men and women in middle life had to bear a much heavier burden of infancy and old age. The family problem, we may say, was greater by ten per cent. in Germany than in England. Time is slowly changing the balance ; the declining birth-rate means, among other things, that Germany is, literally, growing up.

The rate of marriage is somewhat higher than that of the United Kingdom, and about the same as that of France. The illegitimate birth-rate is 8·6 per cent. of all births—more than double the British rate—Bavaria, Saxony, and Hamburg having the worst records. The actual numbers of marriages and births first fell in 1909. A symptom both of the increase of wealth and the slackening growth of population is the virtual stoppage of the once vast stream of German emigration. Only 25,500 emigrants left the Fatherland in 1910, all but 1,800

¹ Actually in 1900 and 1901. The figures are calculated from the Registrar-General's reports.

of these going to the United States, where the number of citizens of German descent has been variously estimated at from 13 to 18 millions. The Teuton mother is ceasing to toil at the rearing of good American citizens.¹

In 1876, of a population of 43 millions, three-quarters were still engaged in agriculture; to-day, of 65 millions, only one-quarter depend upon the land. This vast change carries with it the movement from country to city life, with its apparently inevitable accompaniment of contrasted luxury and poverty, struggle for work and struggle for wealth, overcrowded dwellings, and feverish search for fleeting pleasures. It is hard now to find the unspoilt, genial countryside of the old German novels. The rustic cult of song has given place to the cinematograph show and music-hall. On the other hand, the German newspaper is still a model of substantial information; and immense quantities of cheap books are bought and read. The degree of urbanization is, however, not nearly so high as in the British Islands; and, except Berlin (over 2 millions), Hamburg (1 million), Munich and Leipzig (about 600,000), the cities are of that smaller size which combines the maximum of gain in civic enterprise and social amenity with the minimum of loss from mere agglomeration.

In the multifarious activity of her city governments, modern, like mediæval, Germany is seen at her best. Of her educational system no impression can be given in a few phrases; but it may be said that her university stu-

¹ Cf. Herr von Kiderlen Waechter's speech to the Reichstag Committee after the Agadir crisis, on November 17, 1911: "The further question must be asked, what could we have done with Morocco? Morocco was always represented as a country for colonization. Yes; *whom ought we to have sent as colonists? German peasants? of whom we have ourselves no superfluity?*"

dents are much more numerous than those of Great Britain, even in proportion to population; that she is still ahead in the number and equipment of her superb technical colleges; that the whole school system is more homogeneous, and commands a more single-minded loyalty. England has made great strides forward in the last twenty years, especially in secondary education; and in the elementary schools she has an advantage in the larger proportion of teachers to pupils. German critics find the intellectual level lower, but the good relations of teachers and pupils higher, in England. They cannot understand the toleration of many uninspected and often grossly incompetent private schools, and of a very low leaving age in the public schools; but they appreciate the cult of games, the variety, freedom, and encouragement of individuality in British education. In a word, the two systems reflect much of the best of the two national characters; and it is increasingly recognized that mere imitation would not be good in either direction.

Two other facts of social significance may be here mentioned. Despite the pre-eminence of Germany in beer-drinking, the consumption of alcohol differs little from that of the United Kingdom, and has decreased rapidly in recent years. In 1910, it amounted per head of population to 21.7 gallons of beer, 1.70 gallons of spirits, and 0.68 gallons of wine. Secondly, the suicide records of Central Germany are the highest in Europe. This

SUICIDES, per 100,000 of population (in 1904)

Saxony. 31.	Bavaria. 13.9
Baden 20.3	Whole Empire . . . 21.
Prussia. 20.	
Wurttemberg . . . 17.1	England and Wales 9.9

morbid tendency has often been attributed to the idealis-

454 THE ECONOMIC REVOLUTION OF TO-DAY

tic yet melancholic quality of the German temperament. Is that anything but a polite gloss for physical and mental degeneration, a weakness that shows itself in Saxony in suicide in other States in less violent forms, and that our historical review has led us to expect ?

The Occupation Census of June, 1907, shows the following division of labour :

Agriculture, Cattle-raising, etc.	9,732,472
Forestry, Hunting, Fishing	150,785
Mining, Metal, and other Industries	11,256,254
Commerce and Trade	3,477,626
Domestic and other Service	1,736,450
Professions	1,738,530
Without profession or occupation	3,404,983

Total 31,497,100

There is a crying exception in the above list, for the army and navy also must be counted as occupations, and as influences in the national life take precedence of every other. The conditions of military service, which is compulsory and nominally, though not literally, universal, have been briefly explained. Liability commences at the seventeenth year, and ends at the forty-fifth ; but actual service begins at twenty. The term in (1) the active army is two years in the ranks, and five in the reserve (save for cavalry and horse artillery, where it is three and four years respectively). Reservists must join their corps for a month's or six weeks' training twice in five years. (2) The Landwehr, or second line, are called out for a fortnight's training twice in five years, and are then nominally liable up to the age of thirty-nine, when the men pass into (3) the Landsturm, till forty-five, a last line for home defence only. The navy is also compulsorily recruited, from the maritime and neighbouring popula-

tion, special inducements being offered to able seamen. The active list of the army numbers 622,520, with a reserve capacity estimated at 4,146,000.¹ The personnel of the navy numbers 33,000, with a reserve of about 110,000. Economically, these are facts of first rate importance, for, if we add to the £61,387,731, which is the immediate money cost of the army and navy an allowance of only £100 a head for what these adult able-bodied men might earn in industry during two years of national service, without allowance for the reservists, we find that the real cost of security in times of perfect peace amounts to £94,000,000 a year.

Graver still, if incalculable, are the moral and intellectual effects of army service. Unquestionably, it has depressed and enfeebled the German mind. There is a certain gain of physique; and the raw rustic is awakened to the need of smartness and the attraction of certain aspects of town life. The loss by far outweighs the gain. The curse of German life is the spirit of subservience to social superiors which has survived from times when the Hohenzollerns were really absolute rulers, when the mass of the population were serfs, incapable of directing their own destinies. This spirit is carefully fostered within the barracks, and by many forms of pressure or inducement outside. In Prussia, particularly, the army is encouraged to think itself the master, not the servant, of

¹ The following international comparison relating to the year 1910 is published by the British War Office:

	Active List.	Reserves.	Total.
Russia	1,209,686 ..	5,529,732 ..	6,739,418
Germany	622,520 ..	4,146,000 ..	4,768,620
France	608,000 ..	3,869,000 ..	4,477,000
Great Britain . .	425,524 ..	545,340 ..	970,864
Austria-Hungary .	425,365 ..	3,869,000 ..	4,477,000

the nation ; and, in order to preserve its privileged position, every man must practise a complete servility toward the man next above him. A few years ago the brutality of German petty officers was the by-word of the European press. There has been much improvement in this respect ; but all citizens of independence, initiative, and sensitive intelligence must face, as they come of age, the prospect of two years' torment in the toils of a system which calls neither for intellectual nor moral scruple, but only for the obedience of the automaton. Even as a profession, the army presents but the faintest attraction to any but the titled and the wealthy. The number of middle-class officers has increased, but the upper ranges of the hierarchy are practically monopolised by nobles ; and the Government is powerless against this exclusiveness. It is a significant fact that, for nearly twenty years, no Jew has been permitted to become an officer in the Prussian army, though Jews have risen high in Bavaria and Württemberg ; and during a debate in the Reichstag in February, 1911, General von Heeringen confessed that it would be useless to issue another order against regimental anti-Semitism. Any one who dares to speak out against this reactionary spirit risks the social boycott, the loss of subsequent official employment, and the penalties meted out to the Social Democratic agitator.

Large as has been the transference of energy from rural to town occupations, there has been a growth of agricultural productivity which, small absolutely, is marked in relation to the diminution of the farming population. The increase of wheat crops is, indeed, a dubious benefit, since it has been brought about by means of import duties which have ended by actually reducing the quantity of wheat and flour consumed (from 2·01 cwt. per head

in 1902 to 1·72 cwt. in 1910. In the same period, the Prussian average price of wheat rose from 35s. 2d. to 43s. 8d. per imperial quarter). No doubt, the maintenance of such a fiscal system would be impossible without the votes of the small farmers, who are very numerous, especially in the West. (There were, throughout the Empire, in 1907, over five million holdings under 25 acres in size, each cultivated by one household, and maintaining altogether about fifteen million souls.) In fact, however, the tariff benefits few but the large landowners whose stronghold lies in East Prussia, and injures the peasant farmers, who want cheap fodder, cheap labour, cheap implements, and a better market for dairy and other small produce. Nor has Protection succeeded in preserving a home monopoly, for the imports are now four times as large as the exports of agricultural and food products.

An outstanding feature of the industrial field is the decreasing regard for the Imperial dictum that women should restrict themselves to home work, a disregard apparently due not so much to choice, though that counts much in the middle-classes, but to necessity. Between the Occupations Census of 1882 and that of 1895, the number of women and girls engaged in earning their livings in industry (*Hauptberufe*) and domestic service increased by one million; the proportion so engaged was then returned as 25 per cent. of all females. In 1907, the number had increased by about three millions, and was returned as 30 per cent. A part of this increase is due to classification, but most of it is real. It is variously attributed to family poverty and to the determined effort of manufacturers, especially in the finishing trades, to keep down the cost of production. There has been also a

458 THE ECONOMIC REVOLUTION OF TO-DAY

considerable increase of employment of married women, and of younger members of families, in industry, and some in agriculture. As in other countries, women's work is marked by very low wages, very long hours, and poor sanitary conditions.

The prodigious expansion of German industry in recent years may be illustrated by the cases of mining production and the iron-trade (the second table allows an international comparison to be made) :

MINING

	1890.	1910.
Coal	70 million tons	152 million tons
Lignite	19 " "	69 " "
Potassic Salts and Kainite	1'2 " "	8'3 " "
Iron Ore	11 " "	28 " "
Copper Ore	596,000 tons	926,000 tons
Total Mining	104 million tons	263 million tons
Value	£36,000,000	£100,000,000

	PIG IRON.		CRUDE STEEL.	
	1890.	1910.	1890.	1910.
<i>Germany—</i>		(Millions of Tons)		
Production . . .	4'6	14'8	2'3	12'3
Consumption . . .	4'9	14'1	—	—
<i>United Kingdom—</i>				
Production . . .	7'9	10	3'5	6'5
Consumption . . .	6'8	8'9	—	—
<i>United States—</i>				
Production . . .	9'2	27'2	4'2	26'
Consumption . . .	9'3	27'4	—	—

The total figures of German foreign trade were given in the last chapter. It may be added here that the mercantile marine of the Empire in 1910 counted 4,675 vessels of 2,903,570 net tons, that of the United Kingdom 21,090 vessels of 11,555,663 tons. The German increase in ten years was under a million tons, the British 2,250,000 tons.

Evidently, when all deductions have been made for the mortgages and the extended credit which must attach to a national industry so rapidly and boldly developed, great wealth has been laid up in Germany in the last generation. The ever-spreading enterprise of the Mendelssohns and Bleichroeders, of financial corporations like the Deutsche Bank, the Dresdner Bank, and many others, illustrates it. The amount of German capital invested abroad is now thought to fall little, if at all, short of a thousand millions sterling; that the capital available is inadequate to all the demands upon it, or even the demands of a conservative policy, has been shown in more than one recent crisis. How far the fruit of the nation's labour is shared by different classes is a more difficult question to answer. On the one hand, there is a crop of millionaires, from Frau Krupp von Bohlen, reputedly the richest person in Prussia, with property valued at £9,000,000 and an income of £850,000: landed nobles who have become industrial magnates, like Prince Guido Henckel von Donnersmarck and Prince Christian of Hohenlohe-Oehringen: the Rothschilds and other financial families: some lesser sovereigns like Prince Henry of Pless, downwards. On the other hand, Dr. Otto Most, Director of the Statistical Bureau of the city of Düsseldorf, estimates that "the number of physically capable unemployed throughout the German Empire in the

autumn of 1908 was 780,000, or, including the members of their families, the total number of those who suffered directly from unemployment may be assumed to be 2,500,000, that is, about 4 per cent. of the total population—a very considerable average.” We are also told ¹ that the average income in Prussia *per* income-tax payer increased between 1896 and 1906 from £44 4s. to £52 15s. or 19 per cent., which would, perhaps, leave a small margin of real increase after allowing for the rise in prices of food, clothing, and housing.

The largest single factor contributing to these results is the Imperial tariff; and to its operation we must now turn.

II. THE TARIFF AND THE TRUSTS

We have seen (p. 296 ante) that the abandonment of Free Trade principles in 1879 was actuated, in the first place, by the desire for a new source of Imperial revenue not subject to the continuous parliamentary criticism which direct taxation would excite, and, in the second place, to the desire for a new fighting weapon which, as it was imagined, would do for Germany in the economic what the army had done in the political sphere. Individual grievances, at the end of a decade of commercial and industrial dislocation, counted for much, though not as much as they would in an old industrial State like England. But they were merged, German-fashion, in a doctrine of national self-preservation. As every citizen

¹ *Die Einkommen-Entwicklung in Preussen seit 1896*, Dr. K. Peris, 1911.

sacrificed his liberty for two years to preserve the Fatherland from a French *revanche*, so every citizen must sacrifice the benefit of cheap commodities in order to preserve the market from the flood of British manufactures, and of Russian, American, or Indian grain. No doubt, Goethe and his cosmopolitan contemporaries were the honour of the German past; no doubt, Free Trade had served well in the period of national recovery, and remained the economic ideal. But Germany was now an Empire armed *cap à pie*, set among stout and jealous rivals. Power had made her; power only could preserve her. The war had left a mystic "totality of national life" still to be attained. A robust agriculture and a superlatively developed industrialism—both were necessary to the integrity of a great community. The slums of England were a warning of the mischief of political atomism and of thought only for immediate gain. Germany should stand for constructive economics, for national association, rather than selfish struggle in the creation of wealth. The paternal State must see to this, as it had seen to every other vital need of the people. So said the Bismarckian Professors; and, although the absurdity of "protecting" everybody by taxing everybody has been exposed a thousand times, the Hohenzollern Professors of to-day echo the same ideas.

The Agrarians came first. With over-capitalized lands and falling prices, their outlook was, indeed, gloomy. Rye had been imported since 1852; cheap wheat had now begun to come in also. Many farmers were still attached to Free Trade; but Bismarck easily persuaded them that a very small duty would help them. A beginning was made in 1879 with duties of 2s. 2d. per quarter on rye, wheat, and oats, and 1s. 1d. on barley. *Facile descensus*. A further slight decline in corn prices

in the early 'eighties removed any remaining scruples. In 1885, the rye and wheat duties were tripled; in 1887, they were increased five-fold. In 1879 the Chancellor had declared that "even the most insane Agrarian will never think of a duty of three marks per 100 kilos"; in six years this figure was reached, in eight exceeded. With such an example, the captains of industry naturally demanded a share of State aid; and, for the first time, the lobbies of the Reichstag were the scene of bargaining in the now well-understood American style. Existing duties on manufactures were raised, and old duties restored.

Like a tidal wave, Germany's adoption of Protection reacted, firstly upon the neighbouring countries, producing increases of the Russian Tariff in 1881 and 1882, and of the Austrian and French Tariffs in the latter year; then upon the United States (McKinley Tariff, 1890) and the British Colonies; and, finally, came sweeping backward, producing the supplementary German Tariffs of 1885 and 1887. Bismarck now openly expressed the hope that prices would be raised. In fact, the new areas of wheat supply and the improvement of communications caused a continuance of the decline until 1891, although meat prices were rising steadily during the 'eighties. The corn duties simply prevented the German consumer from getting the benefit of the cheap supplies. Thus, wheat in 1889 stood at 136s. 8d. in England, and at 187·70 marks in Berlin. Since that time, there has been a general increase in the cost of the necessities of life. Directly the rise began, an agitation arose for a change of policy; and Bismarck's successor admitted the mischief by negotiating, in 1892-4, a series of low-tariff treaties with Austria-Hungary, Italy, Switzerland, and Belgium, which were in effect until the end of 1903. By these

measures, the wheat and rye duties were reduced from 10s. 10½d. to 7s. 7½d., that on oats from 8s. 6d. to 6s., and that on barley from 5s. to 4s. 4d. There were several reasons for this change of front on the part of Count von Caprivi and the Imperial Government; but the decisive factor in the end was a failure of the German harvest in 1891, leading to the threat of famine, and serious bread riots in Berlin and other towns. "The grain duties," said the new Chancellor, "are a heavy burden for the State, as they entail a rise in prices of the necessities of life. The raising of these duties to five marks (per double cwt.) strained the bow too much. Their existence thereby became a danger to the State, as they formed a reason for popular agitation. The Government, therefore, decided to reduce them." Protection had also caused unhealthy over-production, leading to periodic crises at home, while foreign retaliation had seriously damaged the export trade. The constitution of the Triple Alliance provided a political reason for the more liberal policy. For, as the Chancellor said, "when we conclude such an alliance of peace, we cannot carry on a commercial war with our allies."

The change was hailed with popular rejoicing; the Emperor well said that millions of people would "sooner or later bless this day," and that Caprivi had "saved the Fatherland from evil consequences." But the Agrarians were greatly provoked by the reduction of duties. Bismarck, from his retirement at Friedrichsruh, denounced the Government for taking "a leap in the dark," and, because it had refused to bargain with interested parties, declared savagely that the authors of the treaties were "privy councillors and officials who are exclusively consumers, and of whom may be repeated the words of the

Bible, ' They sow not, neither do they reap . ' " Germany, however, did not quite escape from the costs of her first Protectionist experiment. A bitter tariff war with Russia greatly injured her trade in 1893 and 1894; and the Canadian-British preference, established in 1898, led to foolish German reprisals, which, five years later, caused the imposition of a Canadian surtax on German goods, a matter of dispute only recently settled.

The Caprivi treaties gave a marked stimulus to German trade; but they provoked a reaction on the part of the Agrarians, now organized in the " Bund der Landwirte," or Agricultural League, which for some years dominated the home politics of the Empire. The liberal tariff was destroyed in December, 1902, Protection being brought back in an extreme form. The new duties only became effective in March, 1906. The duty on wheat was then raised to 5½ marks (11s. 10d. per quarter), and on rye to 5 marks (10s. 10d. per quarter). The importation of meat was checked under pretence of veterinary precautions; and, until the conclusion of the International Sugar Convention in 1899, the beet sugar producers enjoyed large export bounties, so that German sugar was bought in London at considerably less than the German domestic price. The tariff of 1902-6 was the result of a formal alliance between the Agrarians and the Protectionist manufacturers which Count von Bülow, who had become Chancellor in 1900, found irresistible. Of 946 classes of imports, only 200 were now free of duty. The Government estimated that the tariff would add 17 per cent. to the taxation of agricultural produce, and 6 per cent. to that of manufactured goods. The country loudly protested, and there was also some evidence of inter-State opposition; but so strong was the Protectionist

combination in the Reichstag, that the provision for the allocation of any increase in revenue from food duties to the State Pensions Fund for widows and orphans can only be regarded as a cynical pretence of concession.¹

The Tariff Law of December, 1902, was specifically designed with the intention of raising food prices. "A means whereby the agricultural interests are enabled to cover their cost of production is to be found," says the official explanation, "under the given circumstances, by creating a factor which will determine the inland selling price through relative protective duties. Although this means, as is shown by the fluctuations of prices of our wheat during the last twenty years, does not always guarantee remunerative prices, it still brings about generally improved inland rates. Inland prices are raised, so far as a consideration of the circumstances of the last ten years will allow us to judge, in proportion to the duties." Statistics are then given which, as the official statement says, "show that the difference between the inland price and the price of foreign wheat (exclusive of duty) varies according to the amount of duty. It is, however, expected that a raising of duties will favourably effect our internal agricultural interests."

A further device was adopted in 1894 to emphasize and ensure the Protectionist character of the cereal duties. Hitherto, rebates had been given on export of corn proved to be of foreign origin only. Exporters of all grain, home

¹ "Never did a Government more palpably speculate on the ignorance of its working-class supporters. They were asked to consent to an artificial increase in the cost of living amounting to about £50,000,000 a year, in order that, at best, some £5,000,000 might be spent in aid of widows and orphans." Prof. L. Brentano of Munich: *Die Deutschen Getreidezölle*, 1910. A summary of this review of the effect of the corn duties is published by the Cobden Club.

or foreign, were now allowed free import certificates to a like value which, being available for any cereals and some other goods, including coffee and petroleum, and being saleable, amount to a bounty on export. Thus, whenever a bountiful harvest brings down the home price below the amount of the foreign price *plus* duty, it pays the German corn grower to export. The value of the import certificate makes up the lower foreign price to the requisite amount; and, the market being relieved of the surplus supply, the native price swings back to the old level, and the consumer is again paying the full amount of the duties. A more flagrant arrangement, from the national point of view, than this Protectionist fly-wheel it would be difficult to imagine.

In the tariff of 1906, it was the turn of the great manufacturers and the industries which provided them with raw material to press for further protection. This pressure was naturally the strongest on the part of those groups—the blast furnace and steel converting industries in particular—which had formed, or were forming, themselves into cartells, with a view to the exploitation of parliamentary opportunities, and to the concentration of processes in such a way that Tariff privileges could be allotted most easily to the most powerful concerns. Throughout the whole structure of industrial production, a contest was set up between different interests. Thus, Consul-General Oppenheimer, in one of his valuable reports on the trade of Frankfurt, described 1906 as the year of the “price struggle between materials and manufactures.” For instance, the leather trade fought against high prices of hides, its raw material, while its own privileges were fiercely attacked by the bootmakers, who complained of the high prices of leather. The great expansion of the

German iron trades during the 'eighties was much more due to changes in the processes of manufacture than to any help from Protective duties. The Gilchrist-Bessemer process, enabling the conversion of iron containing a high percentage of phosphorus into homogeneous iron, made possible the development of deposits in which Germany is peculiarly rich. This and other improvements led to the grouping together of blast furnaces, steel works, and rolling mills. But no such necessity for combination lay in the manufacture of lighter articles, such as sheets, bars, and wire; and here the Protective tariff was directly instrumental in creating combination.

As cartells extended, and limited the influence of competition upon prices, it became possible, in the middle of the 'nineties, to take full advantage of the tariff in favour of the few combination works producing large, heavy articles. The smaller concerns, purely rolling mills, had then to buy their pig iron and billets from the larger concerns at high prices; and at the same time they were handicapped in the purchase of fuel as compared with the large combined iron and steel works which owned their own collieries, and artificially maintained the outside price of coal. If pig iron and coal could have been freely imported, there would be a natural remedy to the situation. As it is, many of the purely rolling mills had to close down, or to fall into the arms of the larger combined works. This is a type of a series of conflicts produced by the Protectionist system through the advantage it gives to the larger capitalists. Combination in the lower trades either forces a self-preserving combination in the finishing trades—which, however, is there much more difficult to establish and maintain—or it kills them by the advantage it gives the foreigner in finishing processes.

Another result, better known in England, both in the case of Germany and of the United States, is that known as "dumping." The protected large-scale manufacturers found it most immediately profitable to maintain high prices at home and to sell their surplus at any price in foreign markets. The competitor in a Free Trade country had a double advantage from this unhealthy process. A great series of German manufactures had to buy their half-worked material, such as billets, ingots, bars, plates, rolled wire, and sheets, which they need for higher types of goods, at an artificially high price; while their foreign competitors, under a free import system, obtained these goods at an artificially low price. Thus, British sheet-mills and shipbuilding works, and Dutch and Belgian wire-drawing and wire-nail mills, were given an advantage over the similar German trades, an advantage that went far to neutralize the superior training of German engineers and the excellent co-operation of science and manufacture in the Empire. This characteristic of large scale manufacture under high Protection has been less in evidence of late, partly because of the better organization imposed by the cartells, partly because of the improvement of the world-market.

The only branch of the German chemical industries which has enjoyed Protection in recent years—the soda trade—showed the same artificial amalgamation of processes, and excited the same complaints of the artificial maintenance of home prices of raw material. In the textile industries, the spinning cartell produced a like antagonism of interest. For twenty years, syndicates have been all-powerful in the mining industry, and for a shorter time in the iron trade. The two largest are the Rhenish-Westphalian Coal-Syndicate and the Steel Works

Union. The latter chiefly deals with half-finished products; there is also an important Crude Iron Union. These bodies organize output with a view to preventing over-production, and regulate prices. The Steel Works Union, which embraces 90 per cent of all the German iron and steel works, including the Thyssen and Krupp businesses, controls a yearly output of 12½ million tons. The Coal Syndicate, which includes seventy separate companies, governs half the output of the Empire. Both these bodies have increasing difficulties in contending with large independent firms, and in making rules equally applicable to raw-product works and half-finished product works, in the one case, and to "pure" coal concerns and manufacturing firms owning coal mines, in the other. Probably they would suffer periodical collapses but for the gravely disturbing effect that would now be produced through the whole range of national industry by the removal of all control over production and prices. That such control is necessary is common ground to capitalists, Socialist workmen, and the Government itself. The Prussian Government, which is a large owner of mines, as well as of railways, took an active part in procuring the renewal of the Coal Syndicate, as well as of the Potash Syndicate, in 1912. Generally, however, these vast businesses are governed by a few magnates solely in the interests of capital. The system involves the maintenance of a tariff which burdens the whole nation for the benefit of the cartells and the Agrarians. The only plausible arguments for the present import duties are that great vested interests have been built up under Protection which it would be unjust to destroy, and that, in destroying them, the whole economic structure would be shaken from top to bottom.

It is impossible to obtain any close estimate of the total cost of the Protectionist system, because, for some of the departments of national production affected, no statistics exist. We know that an appreciation of the price of all supplies of wheat and rye (in 1908) equal to the duties represented a sum of £38.1 millions, of which only £10.6 (yielded by foreign supplies) went to the State, and the remainder (from home supplies) to the landlords and farmers. It has been estimated that the duties on industrial articles bring in similarly £11.8 millions to the Exchequer, and (counting the appreciation of domestic supplies at only 4 per cent.) £38.2 millions to the manufacturers. But this is an estimate only. The general character and some particular costs of the tariff are, however, susceptible of scientific measurement. In the first place, we know that in each chief department—food stuffs, raw materials, and manufactures—there is a rapid increase of importation. This fact implies so strong a home demand that it is at least highly probable that domestic supplies of the same goods, where there are any, are appreciated by an amount at least equal to the duty on foreign supplies. Rather more than half the imports of the Empire come in duty free. The duties levied on the remaining articles yield to the Customs a sum equal to 19 per cent. of their value. Over a very large area of domestic production, therefore, prices are artificially maintained at nearly a fifth above their natural level. The proportion in which the three orders of imports share in the privileges of the tariff is very significant : ¹

¹ Figures from the Blue Book *British and Foreign Trade and Industry*, Cd. 4954 of 1909, and the *Statistical Abstract for Foreign Countries*, 1912.

Annual Averages.	Total Duty Collected £ Millions.	Food and Drink.	Raw Materials.	Manufactures.
		Percentage of Total Duty.		
1890-4	18	74.09	3.96	21.95
1895-9	23	71.99	5.65	22.36
1900-4	26	72.34	5.74	21.92
1905-8	33	74.97	5.24	19.79
Proportion of Total Imports in 1910 .		27.6%	52.2%	20.2%

The Agrarians are the great beneficiaries ; the large manufacturers come next ; the only department in which the consumer is considered is that of raw materials—because the lesser manufacturers count more in political influence than many ordinary citizens who want cheap food, cheap clothing, cheap housing, and cheap tools. The United States present a strange contrast to Germany in this respect. There, although foodstuffs figure largely in the tariff, industrial Protection is the prevailing type. The Western Republic, in fact, little as it regards the doctrine of Cobden, tolerates no such class as the East Prussian landlords. But the United States resemble the German Empire in these common qualities of Protectionism : In both cases, it was favoured by the weakness of national tradition, and the weakness of popular control over the Federal Government. In both cases, it was encouraged by the greater ease of imposing indirect (that is invisible) taxation after a time of war and trade depression, and the greater ease of collecting Customs revenue than direct taxes. Both show the two, only apparently contradictory, phenomena—a continual rise

of protective duties, and a continual rise in the amount of foreign goods consumed.

We have seen that the Government anticipated that the tariff of 1902-6 would increase the taxation of agricultural produce by 17 per cent. and of manufactured goods by 6 per cent. The evidence suggests that the Protectionist element in the recent rise of prices has been larger than this. The general movement of prices in Europe in the last twenty years shows a high point in 1890, a fall thence to a minimum in 1896, and then an irregular, but latterly a rapid, rise to the present time, so that the autumn of 1911 showed the highest level since 1883. The increase in the United Kingdom and France was much less than in Germany and the United States. Comparing Sauerbeck's summary index-number for the United Kingdom with Mr. R. H. Hooker's¹ for Germany—both covering a large number of commodities—we have the following brief comparison:

PRICES OF COMMODITIES.

	Average of 1890-99.	1900-09.	1910.	Sept., 1911.
United Kingdom	100	111	118	122
Germany . .	100	118	128	139

Again taking the average of 1890-99 as 100, the relative rise in food and raw materials is shown in the next table.

It will be seen that Germany paid 28 per cent. more than England for typical foodstuffs in 1911, and 9 per cent. more for typical materials of manufacture.

¹ Paper on "The Course of Prices," before the Royal Statistical Society, November 21, 1911, *R.S.S. Journal*, lxxv.

Average of	FOOD.			MATERIALS.		
	1900-09.	1910.	Sept. 1911.	1900-09.	1910.	Sept., 1911.
United Kingdom . .	101	108	114	119	127	128
Germany .	108	125	142	123	132	137

It is significant that in Germany there has never been any such pretence as in the United States of maintaining by means of the tariff a high native standard of living as against the competition of foreign low-grade labour. The highest point of corn prices brought no considerable increase in wages. The coal miners, by means of a great strike, obtained a considerable rise of wages between 1888 and 1890, which, however, they soon lost; and it is admitted that the general advance during the last few years has afforded a barely sufficient compensation, and sometimes no compensation at all, for the increase in the prices of food and other necessities which followed the Tariff of 1906. The tariff certainly aggravated the effects of the international crisis of the following two years. Herr Gothein estimates that the duties on rye and wheat represent a burden of from 47½ to 50 marks per annum for a family of five, and the duty on meat a burden of 61 marks—a tax of £5 10s. a year on these two articles alone out of the earnings of the average working-class family, already much smaller than those of the average British family. He attributes to Protective duties a large share of the responsibility for the high infant mortality rates of Germany, the prevalence of dear money, and a general hunt after State patronage, which makes the banks, the railway organization, and the great

body of the bureaucracy parties to the maintenance of a Tariff that injures their healthy development.

In imposing tolls on inland water-ways, the Prussian Government has been influenced by its Agrarian supporters ; but at least it has not allowed itself to be diverted from the task of developing this traffic. The success of the Kiel and Dortmund-Ems Canals was such as to encourage further experiments of the kind ; and, from Stettin to the North Sea, many new lines of water communication are now being opened, while the Rhine, Mosel, Saar, Lahn, Ruhr are being deepened. In these great works the Empire is showing an example of social enterprise to the whole world.

Germany has crowded into the forty years since her great war many of the social changes resulting from the industrial revolution, changes then already far advanced in England, France, and the Eastern States of North America. In this stressful transformation, she has had the advantage of benefitting by the inventions and examples of older countries, and the still greater advantages of an old-established system of compulsory instruction, and habits of order and industry in the people. These sources of strength have been exploited with impressive results, which would have been still more remarkable but for the retarding effect of certain factors arising out of the peculiar character of German history. The chief of these is exhibited in the extraordinary contrast between the economic and the political constitution of Prussia, the major State of the Empire, between its splendidly equipped modern industries and educational establishments, and its hopelessly antiquated Government. No advanced community in Europe shows such an assembly

of anomalous survivals in its central direction ; and this essential incapacity is aggravated by the number and magnitude of the patriarchal, and Socialistic enterprises which the Government has undertaken.

It rests uneasily upon the support of a feudal-minded nobility, who fill the upper ranks of the army, and exercise there a wide influence, a numerous, well-drilled bureaucracy, and a class of commercial magnates who now share with the landlords the privilege of tariff "protection." The mass of the people protest with increasing vigour against the manifold exactions to which they are subjected, as it is said, for the glory of the Fatherland. They go to the poll in millions to express their disapproval of militarism and protectionism. They adopt the expedients familiar in other lands, organizing trade unions (exceeding in membership those of the United Kingdom, the home of trade unionism) and co-operative societies, making the best of city life, and limiting their families. But the people are also dogged by the dead hand. Serfdom is little more than a generation behind. The habit of obedience is ingrained. The subtle poison of the Bismarckian doctrine and practice still works in the national blood. The old weakness of individuality due to ages of oppression and bloodshed, the old extremes of dreamy idealism and egoistic pessimism, are concealed under an affectation of national wilfulness which can only deceive the superficial observer. The few rule and enjoy ; the many obey and suffer ; all are possessed by a morbid restlessness and fear of impending change. From end to end, Germany is haunted by the ghosts of her ancient heroes asking if the free, liberal, and chivalric spirit is dead. To the friendly spectator, some sweeping change seems inevitable. What are the omens ?

CHAPTER XI

THE POLITICAL REVOLUTION OF TO-MORROW

I. THE JUNKER STATE

NO good comes of blinking facts. The ancient blood inheritance which Britons share with Germans is as nothing in comparison with the differences of social and individual character that a radically different history has created. There is no sense in belittling these differences, for variety is the salt of the life of nations as of individuals; but everything depends upon their being rightly understood. It is so intelligent men use the variety of life, to learn from one another. The comparisons they are compelled to make will only be hurtful when they are inspired by vainglorious prejudice. The time has gone by when men can limit their thoughts and interests within the bounds of a narrow patriotism; citizenship of the world has become a very substantial reality, and it has its privileges as well as its duties. There is a common quest of truth amid which the thinkers of different lands forget to be afraid of criticism of what is most familiar, and perhaps most dear, to them. They have risen to a mutuality, if not of understanding, at least of desire for understanding. If Treitschke and Seeley did not, if General Bernhardi and General Roberts do not hesitate to advertize their nationalist and militarist ideals, much less need these pioneers of a higher *Welt-Kultur* hesitate to exchange their experiences and deductions,

even in a time disturbed by alarms of war. They have many precedents, borrowings of educational systems, of experiments in social legislation, of manufacturing processes, as well as the perennial debts of literature, science, and art.

Says Professor R. M. Meyer, of Berlin University, in a suggestive complaint of British coldness toward German literature¹: "Our culture is fundamentally democratic, and that of England is aristocratic, while in political matters the contrary holds good, or nearly so. It is in this opposition, as I think, that we must look for the root-cause of that almost unintelligible attitude of estrangement which the English hold in regard to German culture, and especially to its highest product, German poetry." This thought needs to be carried further. We have seen reason to conclude that the differences in the literature, philosophy, and institutions of the two countries are rooted in deeper differences of historic circumstance now reflected through the range of national character. At the same time, we know that the economic needs which determine the daily life of all Western lands tend ever to produce a greater likeness in their governing institutions. What, then, is this political spirit, so-called aristocratic on the one side, so-called democratic on the other, which holds Germany and England in divergent paths?

The essential thing about the British constitution is that it grows, and with comparative freedom. Made constitutions, however ingenious, can only be second-best; and most constitutions are in this category. England is the oldest political personality in the Western world. Her system of Government is the indeliberate

¹ *Contemporary Review*, January, 1909.

product of centuries of social ferment and ruling practice. It is not only undefined but indefinite ; it is still growing under our eyes. It is now unquestionably based upon the will of the people, and, though full of curious survivals, has reached adult maturity. When Germany was being ravaged and broken to fragments by foreign invaders and greedy nobles, a regular board of statesmen, the Cabinet, was being trained within the Parliament of Westminster, a board drawn from the preponderant party, each member being in charge of a definite part of the administration, and all being united by common opinion and party organization, by their joint and several responsibility to the House of Commons, and by the leadership of the First Commoner of the day. Even in the time of pocket-boroughs, when a democratic franchise was hardly imagined, this was a great achievement, only possible because England had long extinguished serfdom and absolute monarchy, had settled with the Catholic Church as a political power, had passed through her last domestic warfare, and was saved by her insular position from the need of maintaining a large army. Every aspect of the national life was henceforth affected, not as by arbitrary, doctrinaire, or mechanical interference, but by the free interplay of function and structure proper to a growing commercial State. Under a process of selection as natural as that by which primeval man lost his tail, the divine right of royalty and aristocracy faded away. Thanks to a series of accidents, if you will—the accident that Anne was a woman, that George I could not speak English, and that Caroline wore the breeches of George II—the Crown was reduced to a decorative and diplomatic position, with a little more power in foreign affairs and the making of war and peace, but with no absolute power anywhere. More

slowly, the House of Lords was reduced to a subordinate place; while the Commons, from a bear-garden of greedy factions, was being turned into an examination-hall for the testing of the governors of four hundred millions of British subjects. On the two sides of the House, in a responsible Government and a hardly less responsible Opposition, the nation saw, clearly embodied, a choice of policies. This is the first condition of a sane political life. Henceforth, there was always a second string to the bow of sovereignty—a reserve of power and experience particularly important in national emergencies, and essential in face of the modern increase of Government business.

This people has never been tamed, and is cursed with the pride of successful manliness. Raw life has been their schoolmaster, struggle on land and sea, in the factory and in the backwoods. Parliamentary debate, echoed by the infant newspaper press, taught them the elements of politics long before they knew the elements of science or art or economics. Both in and outside Parliament, the organization of parties provided an open arena for the trial of ideas and interests. It was—to take a better metaphor—as though a watershed had been thrown up in a swampy region, and hitherto stagnant or destructive waters set flowing steadily into main channels on either side. The distinction—Whig and Tory, Liberal and Conservative—was real enough to be stimulating, not deep enough to be subversive. Thus, the public services were gradually rescued from privilege, and subjected to public criticism and Parliamentary control. With the ripening of the Industrial Revolution, new problems and new parties emerged. The House was democratized, because a commercial State cannot to-day rest upon narrow foundations. The Ministry became “responsible” in a larger, more

searching sense. Parliament contains many anomalies, but no serious sinecure. The movement of adaptation to modern conditions is slow—it could hardly be otherwise with such an extent and variety of functions—but it carries with it the assent of the most politically competent population in the world. So much of democracy as the system expresses is the fruit not of doctrine, but of necessity, not of any wicked machinations of political extremists, but of the thousand imperceptible changes of a long natural development. For two centuries it has grown from strength to strength, suffering hardly any of the grave disturbances that have visited neighbouring polities, ever broadening its base to support the increasing burden. The secret of its proved strength, its achievements, and its possibilities, lies in this supreme rule of manhood—that power and responsibility should lie together, and in this supreme rule of statecraft—that the best government is self-government. It is an incomparable training-ground, demanding high honour and enormous working power in the Minister, loyalty and efficiency in the civil servant, understanding and criticism from the Member of Parliament, and sympathetic vigilance in the Constituencies. The very names are significant. There is no Chancellor, because the royal household has long fallen out of the political machine, but only a Prime Minister; First Servant of the Commonweal; the Executive operates not through bureaucrats—office-rulers—but through civil *servants*; the Constituencies really constitute the supreme power; Members of Parliament are more than deputies or delegates.

In Berlin, also, twenty-three years ago, a young King-Emperor took the crown of tradition, while a grey statesman wielded from an obscure office for a few more months

the substantial sovereignty. But in London there is no sceptre of personal rule, nor any licence for the whims of genius, but only, as it were, a pivot upon which a myriad influences are nicely balanced—Premier, Ministers, the King, if he be a personality, the Opposition leaders, private Members, party organizations, shrewd officials, City and County Councils, financial and commercial bodies, labour unions, pulling hither and thither under the eyes of a watchful press and a million-headed jury. So easily does it work, many Englishmen are unaware that they possess, by little merit of their own, the finest instrument of government in the modern world.

What a contrast to all this does Germany present. In the first place, it suffers all the weakness inherent in federal States. To the superficial observer, this weakness is concealed by the real unity of the Customs League, the large measure of unity in military organization, and the appearance of unity represented in the figure of the Emperor. The State Governments are, as we have seen, most diverse in their constitution. In the South, there is an admirable vigour of public life, a general spirit of progress, an open way for democratic developments. The Kingdoms of Bavaria and Württemberg, the Duchies of Baden and Oldenburg elect their Landtage by direct universal suffrage and secret ballot. The three republican Senates of the Northern ports, modernized oligarchies, are to be regarded rather as Chambers of Commerce than national Governments. But Prussia overshadows all; and, in Prussia, the State, making a virtue and a boast of its system of caste privilege, is at feud with the body of its people. The figures of the result of the Prussian general election of 1908 exhibit at once the cause and the acuteness of the conflict. The principal parties are here named

482 POLITICAL REVOLUTION OF TO-MORROW

in order of their voting strength ; the last column shows how the seats would be distributed if votes were of equal value :

Party. ^t	Seats.	Votes.	True Proportion.
Social Democrats	7	598,522	113
Catholic Centre'	104	499,343	94
Old Conservatives	152	354,786	67
National Liberals	65	318,589	60
Poles, Danes, Guelfs, Independents	19	404,802	76
Freisinnige (Radicals)	36	120,593	22
Free Conservatives	60	63,612	11
	443	2,360,247	443

In a Ståte that has enjoyed compulsory schooling for a century, justifiably proud of the successes of its scientifically-equipped industry and commerce, and under the forms of a consultation of national opinion, a result is presented that would have been singular even among the anachronisms of the eighteenth century. With far fewer votes than the Social Democrats, who obtained only seven seats, the two Conservative parties secured nearly half the seats of the Diet. Some of the anomalies of the above list are produced rather by the antiquated distribution of seats than by the three-class system of votes according to wealth. It is reckoned that more than a half of the deputies were returned by small rural constituencies representing between a quarter and a third of the population. Thus, the distribution of seats guarantees to the Agrarians an over-representation ; the distribution of votes for each seat doubly ensures their supremacy ; and over all—in case the Conservatives returned should

suddenly turn Socialist—stands the Herrenhaus, the Prussian House of Lords. Such is the material base of the divine-right idealism of William II. It is not surprising to find that, under such a system, even when a desperate campaign was being waged against it, only a third of the electors would take the trouble to vote. The result, however, sufficiently marks the unpopularity of the Government, which, if seats were proportionate to votes, would be absolutely dependent upon the Catholic Centre and the main body of National Liberals, and would have to face an Opposition more homogeneous than that of the Reichstag, and more determined because it would be consciously directed against the headquarters of reaction in the Empire.

The Government admits that the system, as it stands,¹ cannot last, but refuses obstinately to contemplate any radical reform. In October, 1908, the speech from the Throne declared it to be the royal will that the electoral arrangements should undergo "an organic development, in accordance with economic evolution, the spread of knowledge and political intelligence, and the growth of responsibility towards the State." In the following Spring, there were many popular demonstrations in favour of reform, with some bloodshed. Nevertheless, Prince Bülow came before Parliament with empty hands. Falling from power, he left the problem to Herr von Bethmann-Hollweg, who, in February, 1910, produced a new Prussian electoral law slightly modifying the existing order. It proposed to maintain the public vote, the tax-division of the electorate, and the unequal constituen-

¹ For further details of its working see "Die preussischen Landtagswahlen von 1908, und aus früheren Jahren." *Zeitschrift des Königlich. preus. statistischen Landesamts*. Berlin, 1909.

cies, but to abolish the method of voting by two stages, and to re-classify the electorate (by pushing up civil servants and others) so that the first class of voters would embrace 5 or 6, (instead of 3·3) per cent., the second class about 20 (instead of 12) per cent., and the third class 75 (instead of 84·5) per cent. The disappointment was intense. But the difficulty within the Landtag is the narrowly selfish view the large parties take of every measure. The National Liberals, representing the professional and upper commercial classes, favour the pluralistic property vote, but would gain by a redistribution of seats. The Centre objects to redistribution, but not to a more democratic franchise. When the Bill came before the Lower House in February, 1910, a series of manœuvres began, resulting in a Conservative-Centre alliance against the effort of Social Democrats, Radicals, and National Liberals to broaden the measure. Indirect voting was actually reinstated by the majority; and on May 27, to the general satisfaction, the Bill was withdrawn by the Government. The *rapprochement* of advanced Liberals and Social Democrats was a new fact in Prussia, and remained the only gain of months of agitation.

II. THE GATHERING STORM

We now turn to the political outlook in the Empire at large; and here it will be necessary to take a larger view of the facts. The table given on the next page presents the nearest possible approach to a map of the parliamentary development of modern Germany. In the period of

RESULT OF REICHSTAG ELECTIONS, 1871-1912.

	1871	-74	-77	-78	-81	-84	-87	-90	-93	-98	1903	1907	1912
Conservatives	56	21	40	59	51	76	80	72	70	57	58	62	45
Free Conservatives	39	36	38	57	27	28	41	21	28	22	19	22	14
Anti-Semites and Farmers' Union	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	5	20	24	17	28	15
National Liberals	120	152	127	98	{45 47 70}	51 74 }	98	41	53	48	50	54	45
Radicals	48	50	39	28	70	74	35	79	49	53	38	53	44
Centre and Free Clericals .	63	91	92	94	100	99	98	106	96	102	100	104	91
Poles	14	14	14	14	18	16	13	16	19	15	16	20	18
Guelphs	4	4	5	10	10	11	4	11	7	9	7	2	5
Alsacians	—	15	10	15	15	15	15	10	8	10	10	8	9
Danes	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Social Democrats	2	9	12	9	12	24	11	35	44	56	81	43	110

the thirteen legislatures since the foundation of the Empire, the number of deputies has increased from 347 to 397. Of the latter number, Prussia returns 236, and Bavaria 48. The legislative period was reduced in 1888 from five to three years. Some fractions are not here separately shown; but, simplified as the table is, it indicates the injurious division of the assembly into many groups which results from the continued refusal of full parliamentary powers, and makes the work of the Government an endless manœuvring for instable majorities. This is the first weakness of the Reichstag as compared with the British and American, and even the French Chambers. It marks it out as a body that has to be managed, subordinate, if not impotent. The ebb and flow of party strength exhibits the following main features:—

Conservatives. The old Conservative party and their "Free" colleagues, the Reichspartei, have steadily lost ground since 1887, and cannot now poll their former strength even when they carry with them the quasi-democratic Anti-Semites and Farmers' Union deputies. Taking the three groups together, they lost 38 seats at the last elections.

Liberals and Radicals. This is a most heterogeneous section. The National Liberals have never since held the position which Bismarck's patronage gave them in the days of the French War and the Kulturkampf. The establishment of the first Conservative-Catholic block, by which the Protective tariff was carried in 1879, led, as we saw, to a secession, a portion of the party forming a Liberal Union (1880). Four years later, these and the Progressives (Fortschritt) coalesced, as the Freisinnige. In the same year, the "Blue-Black" combination

broke down over the first votes of Colonial subsidies and the coercion of the Poles. A new coalition of National Liberals and Conservatives was then tried, but was badly beaten at the polls in 1890. With Caprivi's short term, the National Liberals partially recovered. They are distinguished from the Conservatives, mainly in this, that the interests they are organized to protect are those of modern commercial magnates, not of feudal landlords. They make it a matter of pride that "we were the first party to support unreservedly a strong army and a strong navy." ¹

The "Radicals," as we have perhaps too strongly called them, have been weakened by timidity in a time of realist reaction, by uncertainty between old-fashioned Manchesterism and the newer currents of social reform, and by division into small groups. Their history illustrates the confused state of political life in Germany, and especially the demoralization produced by Bismarckian intrigue and the cult of force. After the realignment of 1884, the "German Radical Party" split in 1893 over the military question; a "Radical People's Party" was formed under Eugen Richter, while the other Progressives formed a "Radical Union" with a somewhat more moderate programme. At length, in 1908, a combination of the three Radical groups—the *Freisinnige Volkspartei*, *Freisinnige Vereinigung*, and *Deutsche Volkspartei*—was brought about under the name *Fortschrittliche Volkspartei*, Progressive Populist Party; and a tendency to co-operate with the Social Democrats has slowly grown in the interval.

The Centre. This and the four nationalist groups are the steadily calculable quantities of every Reichstag. At

¹ Manifesto of May 1, 1898.

the last elections, however, the Catholics lost thirteen seats, and gave place as the strongest party to

The Social Democrats, whose steady growth is the great portent of our table. It is, of course, not to be thought of as representing a solid body of four million convinced Marxian economists; but it is the party which takes up most logically and sincerely the many and various grievances of the working masses of the nation. It is said that the 75 daily papers owned by the party have a circulation of 1,100,000 copies; *Vorwaerts*, the central organ; 139,000 daily; *Die Neue Zeit*, 475,000 weekly; the humorous *Wahre Jacob*, 250,000 weekly, and a propaganda paper for women, 37,000 fortnightly. It is needful to remind the Western reader that individualism has never been more than exotic in German thought, and that there was, therefore, nothing outrageous to the Teutonic mind in a rational collectivism. It needed only, on the one hand, the softening of the Marxian dogma and the broadening of tactics which the Revisionist Movement, under Bernstein and others, has brought about, and, on the other hand, the example of successful State enterprise, to popularize the Social Democratic teaching. The party shares with the Conservatives and the Centre the advantage of having held throughout to a consistent policy; and it is remarkable as the strongest parliamentary party in the world definitely antagonistic to every kind or degree of militarism and aggression. After the Nuremberg Congress of September, 1908, when a vote was carried censuring Southern members of the party who had taken part in voting the budgets of their States, it was hoped and feared that a definite split of the "orthodox" and "revisionist" wings would follow. Under a free and normal political life, this might have

happened ; as it is, the party leaders agree in the main points, and their vast army holds together.

We say, roughly, that the German spirit is doctrinaire, while the British spirit is experimental. The clear-cut, catastrophic doctrine of Marx appealed to the one, as a vague and shifting poetized evolutionism appeals to the other. But a doctrine which never shifts is in constant difficulty with circumstances, which are perpetually shifting, so that the catastrophe tends to happen within instead of outside the body of the elect. As Marx did not live to see more than the first application of evolutionary methods to history, so, too, he did not live to see his declaration of the class war tried in the mill of daily practical politics as it is working now throughout the West. While Socialists were a small and powerless minority, ground under the heel of a Bismarckian Caesarism, the theory made way, as Lutheranism, with its lurid antitheses of heaven and hell, the elect and the damned, had done on the same ground long before. But when, on the one hand, all kinds of catastrophic philosophies began to fade in the general broadening of the popular intelligence, when, on the other hand, Socialists began to enter Parliaments and municipal councils, and trade unionism became a first-class power in affairs, the demand for something more satisfying than the vision of an ultimate Social Revolution broke out insistently. In Prussia, where Hegelian influences in thought and Bismarckian methods in public life remain strongest, the Orthodoxy maintains itself ; but everywhere in recent years there has been a growing effort, led by men like Von Vollmar and Bernstein, to modify both theory and practice. It was very characteristic that the difference should take a territorial colour reflecting many economic and social contrasts. The

Southerners, headed by Dr. Franck, justified the softer political climate of Bavaria, Baden, and Württemberg, and claimed independence in local affairs. If the veteran Bebel were not a Prussian by nature, the bitter struggle with Prussian 'bureaucracy and Junkerdom would have made him, in his own house, an authoritarian. In the sunny South, under universal suffrage and general toleration, where it seems only an act of courtesy for a Socialist deputy to attend a Grand Duke's funeral, why, they ask, should an alien sourness be introduced; why not aim at producing a *social* consciousness, rather than a *class* consciousness and a class war, and to that end work constructively, to obtain small immediate benefits, without sacrificing the ultimate and larger aim?

The Empire and the Emperor have been served so far by five Chancellors. Bismarck continued for twenty years. There has been no second Bismarck. Caprivi loosened the tariff and enlarged the army in his three years' term. Hohenlohe, a gentle old man, held office till October, 1900, years largely concerned with the colonies and the new navy. It was then Bülow's turn. All went comparatively well till January, 1906, when the long continued rise of food prices and the agitation for reform in Prussia came to a head in a series of popular meetings of unprecedented size and earnestness. The meagre results of the Algeciras Conference and a series of new taxes necessary for the increase of the fleet were received with rising ill-temper. An epidemic of *Schwarzseherei* broke out in the autumn of 1906, and the Kaiser's protest at Breslau did not cure it. It was discovered that Germany was isolated, "encircled." The Emperor, it was hinted, was the plaything of a "Camarilla." When a rogue, who became famous as "the Captain of

Köpenick," captured a squad of soldiers and used them to protect him while robbing a town hall, the outer-world might laugh, but to Germans it was too significant of the superstition of the omnipotent uniform in which they had been trained. Prince Hohenlohe's *Memoirs* disillusioned the simpler survivors of the days which the schoolbooks still called heroic. Count E. von Reventlow, a nationalistic Conservative, in his *Kaiser Wilhelm II und die Byzantiner*, complained that, during the past fifteen years, the Emperor had placed a gulf between himself and the people in order to please his flatterers; the "Byzantines" of divine right. The Centre became more and more exacting. "I have been reproached," Prince Bülow replied to his critics in the Reichstag, on November 14-15, 1906, "with being too amiable toward foreign countries, and, on the other hand, with pursuing a provocative policy. Between these extremes I can pursue the just mean. It is a German mania—I might almost say a calamity—to quote Bismarck quite wrongly, and to make a doctrine, a system, of every one of his gestures. The incomparable greatness of that statesman was not in his sparkling uniform, or in his clinking spurs, but in the just measure he took of men and things. The Pan-German League, in particular, likes to put on cavalry boots, and to gird on Bismarck's big sword. It is useless to make oneself seem terrible. I think we should also put ourselves on guard against the consequences of a pessimism which there is nothing to justify. The English themselves are of opinion that no people has such good reason as the Germans for regarding their future with optimism. There is no reason for fearing isolation. We have no need to run after any one, for that would not only be unworthy of us, but would be stupid. Let us keep

the just mean, and, above all, let us avoid that nervousness which, high or low, so often takes possession of us." On December 13, he made a great appeal for "our prestige, our military honour," engaged in the costly Herrero campaign. Nevertheless, by a majority of nine votes, the credits were rejected. It was the end of the second "Blue-Black Block." The Chancellor dissolved the Reichstag forthwith, and asked for a Conservative-Liberal majority.

So far, he succeeded. The Centre kept its full strength, but the Social Democrats lost heavily before the rally of nationalist forces. In his verbal encounters with Dr. Spahn and Herr Bebel, Prince Bülow performed prodigies. The South African credits were voted; the Colonial Office was constituted a separate Ministry, under Herr Dernburg; the Polish Expropriation law was forced through the Landtag. But no major problem could be touched, and the entry of seven Social Democrats into the Prussian Chamber showed how little the people were reconciled. Maximilian Harden's articles in *Zukunft* implicating, especially, Prince Philip zu Eulenburg, former Ambassador at Vienna, and Count Kuno von Moltke, military governor of Berlin, had led, in the first place, to the Emperor's separation from these leading spirits of the "round table of Castle Liebenberg," and, afterwards, to the unsavoury exposures of the Moltke-Harden and Eulenburg trials. The country had not recovered from the moral shock of these events when a new bomb exploded in the shape of the *Daily Telegraph* "interview" of October 28, 1908. Perhaps the most disturbing thing lay not in the article itself, but in the manner of its publication. The manuscript, it was explained, had been sent by the Emperor to the Chancellor, who was holi-

daying at Norderney. Prince Bülow did not read it, as it came with a mass of other official papers, but passed it on to the Foreign Office, where again it was simply initialled, and sent to the Emperor. The Prince offered his resignation; it was declined. Meanwhile, a storm of complaint and excited criticism, such as no German sovereign, perhaps no sovereign of any country, had suffered, broke over the country. Scores of public meetings were held; newspapers of every colour, Conservative as well as Radical and Socialist, demanded that the personal régime should be ended.

The Chancellor used all his gifts of diplomatist and debater to cover his sovereign. The German people, he suggested, did not want a phantom Emperor, but one of flesh and blood. His governmental acts must be distinguished from his personal opinions. But "the fact that the publication of his conversations has not produced in England the effect His Majesty expected, but has made a deep and unhappy impression, will, I am convinced, lead His Majesty to observe henceforth, in his private relations, that reserve which is as indispensable for a continuous policy as for the authority of the Crown. If it were otherwise, neither I nor any of my successors could bear the weight of the responsibility of office."¹ A week later, in a conference with the Chancellor, William II, according to the official report, "received the explanations in a highly serious spirit, and expressed his will in words to the effect that, notwithstanding the exaggerated, and, as he considered, unjust character of the criticisms to which he had been publicly subjected, he regarded it as his highest Imperial duty to safeguard the stability of the policy of the Em-

¹ Reichstag, November 10-11, 1908.

pire without prejudice to the responsibilities imposed by the Constitution," and he "accordingly approved the statements of the Imperial Chancellor." In a directly-inspired article on the following day (November 18), the *Kölnische Zeitung* explained that the Chancellor had told the Kaiser plainly the danger of the feeling his interventions had created. "Not only the Chancellor and the Prussian Ministry, but the representatives of the confederate States were unanimous on this point. They also raised their voices, at once a prayer and a warning, to show the Emperor the dangers of the path he had been pursuing." Neither the House nor the country was satisfied with this assurance. The Radicals and Socialists demanded full Ministerial responsibility, the Centre a milder measure of influence over the Chancellor. The Government refused to participate in the discussion; and the various motions were quietly shelved. In fact, the substantial end had been gained. Divine right had been cried out of court, and a real, though undefined, limit had been put upon the powers of the Emperor.¹

It was not, formally at least, this difficult episode that broke Prince Bülow, but a problem toward the solution of which no substantial progress has yet been made,

¹ The Emperor's subsequent speech at Königsberg, in August, 1910, and his threatening remark about Alsace-Lorraine, already quoted, gave rise to passing criticism. The Crown Prince, from whom the Kaiser first heard of the Harden-Eulenburg revelations, was himself the cause of much public and official annoyance in November, 1911, when, attending the Morocco debate in the Reichstag, he made himself conspicuous by applauding the speech of Herr von Heydebrand, the Conservative leader, in criticism of the Franco-German settlement. The Crown Prince is Commander of the First Royal Huzzas; the Princes Eitel Friedrich, Oscar, and Joachim are also in the army; Prince Adalbert is in the navy; the one civilian member of the family, Prince August Wilhelm, has received a legal training.

the fundamental problem of modern States—finance. The Empire conspicuously fails to pay its way. The French milliards were soon spent (except £6 millions, still kept in gold at Spandau as a "war chest"). In 1886, the Empire had a debt of about £24 millions. The chief items in the budget were then, and still are, on the side of revenue, customs and federal contributions, and on the side of expenditure, the army and navy, and federal allocations, that is surplus Customs contributions returned to the States. Up to 1900, when the cost of the navy began to alter the balance, more was paid by the Imperial Exchequer to the States than was demanded from them. In 1901-5, the allocations were 22 per cent. less than the contributions, in 1906-8 they were 88 per cent. less.¹ This is a constant subject of dispute between the State and Imperial Governments. The former, with no tariff to fall back upon, have their own increasing requirements to meet, and share only very partially the enthusiasm of Berlin for the piling up of armaments. In 1904, it was decided that the whole net receipts of the Customs should be retained by the Empire, the States receiving only the proceeds of the spirits excise and Imperial stamp duties. In 1906, the States began to fall into debt to the Empire; and in 1909 over £7 millions of arrears had to be wiped out, that is, added to the funded debt. It was then arranged that the whole net proceeds of the Imperial stamp duties should also be retained by the Empire, the States receiving only the product of the spirit excise, while the maximum of further contributions from the States to

¹ Percy Ashley: "The Financial Systems of Germany." *Statistical Society Journal*, April, 1912. Mr. Ashley estimates the present taxation of the Empire at £3 per head, or £14 per average family, per annum.

the Empire should be limited to 8*d.* per head of population.

The Imperial debt, which had risen to £98 millions in 1901, and £177 millions in 1906, now exceeded £213 millions. There was a regular yearly deficit of between fifteen and eighteen millions sterling. The Chancellor warned the Reichstag that public credit was being dangerously affected. The Government, therefore, proposed the establishment of a sinking fund, new taxes on alcohol, beer, wine, tobacco, gas, electricity, and advertisements, and a new succession duty. This last item was the stumbling-block. The Junkers declared that their temporary union with the National Liberals was not worth this sacrifice. Supported by the confederated Governments, the Chancellor refused to give way. On June 24, 1909, the succession duty was finally rejected by a Conservative-Centre majority of eight votes; and a few days later Prince Bülow resigned. It was an ambiguous victory at once for Parliamentary control—the first of its kind—and for the reactionary view of finance.

III. THE VERDICT OF THE EMPIRE

His successor, Herr von Bethmann-Hollweg, a Conservative bureaucrat of narrow temper, has done nothing toward the permanent solution of the problems indicated above, and, by his ultra-Prussian air has more than once strained the loyalty of the Southern States. The Conservative scheme of taxation which he accepted at the

outset was a mere postponement of the financial difficulty. The State Governments called for a reduction of their matricular contributions ; but Grand Admiral von Tirpitz and the army authorities must have their millions. The Imperial debt is reckoned in 1912 at £269 millions ; add to this the State and communal debts, and Germany owes a larger amount than England has outstanding after generations of warfare and empire-building.¹ Any Minister who has the temerity to stand out for sound finance, or a subordination of agrarian to commercial interests, risks his political career. It was thus that Herr Dernburg, the first Colonial Minister of the Empire, fell, in June, 1910. It was reckoned on that occasion that William II had used up sixty-nine Ministers and State Secretaries during his reign, a large number for a country which offers so little inducement for the cultivation of Ministerial talent. It was so that Herr Wer-muth, Secretary for the Imperial Treasury, fell in March, 1912. He had dared, with the approval of the Federal Council, to insist that there should be no new expenditure without full provision to meet it—"not paper provision of any sort, but cash provision." Scenting death duties, the Centre and the Conservatives hurried upon the trail of the imprudently honest official ; the votes

¹ In October, 1910, Imperial loans amounted to £250 millions, the aggregate of State loans to £750 millions, and communal debts to over £270 millions, a total of £1,270 millions, against the estimated £1,254 millions of British national and local indebtedness. Cf. Ashley, *loc. cit.* Germany has, however, substantial State properties to place against these debts.

It may be noted here that the Royal Civil List now amounts to about £950,000 a year, the sum having been raised in 1889, and in 1910, each time by £175,000. The Kaiser owns some ninety estates which have been estimated to yield about £400,000 a year ; and he is also a beneficiary under certain trusts of the Prussian royal family.

were passed without provision being made, and Herr Wermuth offered the only protest in his power, a letter of resignation.

These are much more than personal, or even party, questions. They exhibit one corner, at least, of the chaos of greedy intrigue and rivalry into which the offices which Bismarck ruled with a rod of iron have fallen. If there must be stages between monarchical and parliamentary government,* the sooner they are got through the better for any modern State. The Imperial Government of Germany, brave as is the front it presents to the outer world, is stricken with a deep impotency. Its evasions speed the day of reckoning. Not daring to go back, and unwilling to go forward, it lives from hand to mouth, half its strength exhausted in the effort to keep its "block" together by perpetual transactions, to reconcile rival Ministers, and to please the Court. Dr. Haussman, a leading Bavarian Radical deputy to the Reichstag, and editor of the Munich review *Maerz*, draws a lurid picture of the "lack of cohesion and lack of plan in the higher Imperial departments," which he illustrates by an account of the surreptitious propaganda carried on by Admiral von Tirpitz for the glorification of his office and the aggrandizement of his estimates. Admiral von Tirpitz is, by the letter of the Constitution, a mere expert assistant of the Chancellor, the only responsible Minister. Under Hohenlohe and Bülow, however, the heads of departments obtained a degree of independence unknown in the old days. A much discussed dilemma has, therefore, arisen among constitutionalists: whether is it better to support a single real responsibility already formally in being, or to risk a period of disorder through the growth of Ministerial independence, in the hope of obtaining at

length a collectively responsible Cabinet? Meanwhile, the disorder deepens; and neither Herr von Bethmann-Hollweg nor, for instance, Admiral Tirpitz is a Dernburg or a Wermuth, to be disposed of summarily.

It was, then, no simple account that was to be settled in the most remarkable of all the conflicts of word and vote in modern Germany—the general election of January, 1912. The Protectionist tariff, with its attendant ills of high prices and low wages; the policy of colonial adventure and vast armaments, with its consequence in a dangerous feud with England; the whole absurd fabric of romantic monarchism; the subservience of the Imperial Government to the Junkers, and its consequent inability to evolve an honest finance and an efficient administration; the irresponsibility of Ministers entrenched behind the property vote of the Prussian Landtag: all these weak places in the armour of the German Michael were exposed in this unwonted assault. If party divisions were fewer—in other words, if the country were further advanced toward moral unity, and the people were politically grown up—if the Liberal and Radical parties had not so often compromised themselves, the challengers would have swept all before them. With a score of parties appealing on programmes of great diversity to constituencies having a marked diversity of interest, the emphasis of the result was necessarily modified. The Government helped greatly to simplify the issue by appealing to all to unite against the Social Democrats. But, especially among party stalwarts, old divisions are not to be thus easily conjured away. The Catholics have been in close alliance with the Conservatives; but they must, at least, make a show of democratic leanings. The National Liberals have been an anti-Governmental

party, and want a sounder finance, but are strongly Protectionist and Imperialist. The Radical *Volkspartei* are in favour of Free Trade, but do not wish to risk the disorder that a sudden departure from Protection would bring about. To throw these and other shades of opinion, expressed with Teutonic turgidity, before the workmen of any town in the world would be to invite confusion. In such a case, the people follow their instincts; and the general instinct was to reply to the cry of the Berlin bureaucrats, "All against the Socialists," with the counter-cry, "Any against the Government." The Socialists had given evidence of vitality by winning ten bye-elections since 1907; it was only a question of how far they could reach.

The first ballots, which took place on January 14, showed that this was further than had been expected: from fifty-three seats, the party had already risen to sixty-four, with others half won, capturing among other places the Clerical stronghold, Cologne. The National Liberals, Radicals, Conservatives, and Catholics had all lost ground substantially. Among 207 members, only four National Liberals had been elected outright, and no Radical; to such a pass had the more moderate types of political thought come. Everything now depended upon whether they would, in the last resort, gravitate toward the Right or the Left. The Radicals heartily, the National Liberals less generally, decided for the Left. The final result is shown in our Reichstag table. The Social Democrats doubled their representation, only losing by nine votes the one seat in Berlin which they do not hold. The Centre, the next strongest party, returned with a loss of thirteen seats held on the eve of the contest. The National Liberals and Radicals, saved by their second-ballot compacts,

lost only thirteen seats; the Conservatives lost forty-three, the severest punishment Junkerdom has yet received. The Left, if we count the National Liberals there, had a small majority over all the remaining parties.

But these figures do not fully display the extent of the national awakening. The distribution of seats in the Reichstag remains as it stood forty years ago. There should be one deputy to about 150,000 of population. In fact, petty States like Lauenburg and Schaumburg-Lippe count against city constituencies like the sixth division of Berlin, with its 700,000 inhabitants, and the third division of Hamburg, with over half a million. Taking only the record of the chief parties in the first ballots, we find the following relative voting strength:

	Votes, 1912.	Per cent. of Total Vote.	Votes, 1907.
Social Democrats	4,250,329	35	3,259,020
Radicals	1,558,330	12.5	1,233,933
National Liberals	1,672,619	13	1,637,048
	7,481,278	60.5	
Conservatives	1,855,946	15.5	2,004,602
Centre	2,035,290	17	2,179,743
	3,891,236	32.5	
Total Vote	12,206,808	—	11,262,775

By proportional representation, the Social Democrats and Radicals, with only fifteen Liberal allies, would hold

a majority in the Parliament of the Empire, as it might then be properly called.¹

It would be foolish to build upon these facts expectations of some early and sudden transformation of German society. A violent upheaval may, indeed, come, though the probabilities are against it. The desirable revolution which would mould the institutions of the Fatherland to modern needs could only be gradual, for it must work in and through hearts and minds born in penury and trained to subjection. Enlightened Germans recognize how large a change must be wrought in the national temper ere there can be a liberal Germany. Comparing English and German society, Professor Hermann Levy, of Heidelberg, says: ² "English snobbishness is of a merely private character. In Germany, it is the place one has in Society which is the beginning of the ladder reaching to official position and public influence. The position one has in Society largely determines the position one has as a citizen; and this is certainly in contrast to the idea that the public or national merits of any man ought to determine his social position. . . . For more than twenty-five years, the Government has been identified with the interests, privileges, and wishes of the higher classes, or the aristocracy; and, as a consequence, it has sought to make those who are not identified with official policy bear the stamp of inferiority as regards public usefulness and value. Accordingly, we see that many great busi-

¹ In the elections to the Bavarian Landtag which shortly followed, the Clerical majority was greatly reduced. Out of 163 seats, the Socialists obtained 30, a gain of 9, the Liberal groups 39, a gain of 12, the Centre 87, a loss of 11, and the Conservatives 7, a loss of 10.

² In an address before the Sociological Society of London, on June 11, 1912.

ness men whose interest it would be to stand, in many ways, for liberty are reactionary in their public opinions. . . . Titles, honours, decorations, and the fact of belonging to a certain class largely determine the valuation of a man in public life. This state of affairs is feudal, mediæval ; it reflects in part the gild spirit. It is, at any rate, opposed to the idea that everybody, whatever his place in society, may have equal rights as a citizen, and that the worth of his labour must be the measure of his public distinction and remuneration." In these respects as in others, Professor Levy invites a more generous exchange of thought between the two countries. " You can learn from us in matters of organization, and, more particularly as regards the spirit which informs our organizations—for they are not mere machinery : behind them is the German mind. And we, on our part, have much to learn from you, if Germany is to become a country giving full play to individual initiative and efficiency."

Individual initiative *and* efficiency. To suppose that any large kind of efficiency can be obtained without a development of upstanding manhood is to show little insight into character. In the graver emergencies of life, especially, a confident, because well-poised and free-moving, mind is everything ; and that nation is strongest, whatever its resources of money or arms, that has the largest number of such minds. Let us assume an average of ability among nations. In one country, the roads are open to talent, public as well as private ; it varies rapidly, and produces an ideal of free variety. In the other, only the private roads are open, and not all of them ; only property, at one end, and academics, at the other, are favoured. Can there be any doubt of the respective results ? If the Kaiser and his Ministers and high officials

were men of Napoleonic genius, they could not give security, in modern conditions, to a people low in spirit because starved of power and the responsibility which power carries with it. When the handful of British colonists in North America determined, at whatever risk, to set up house for themselves, they began the writing of their future Constitution with the significant words, "*We, the people of the United States* " ; and, to-day, fifteen millions of German and forty millions of British blood rest secure under that proud inscription. There could be no such fortune for the old Continent, divided and debilitated by privilege, hatred, and ignorance. The romantic child of Central Europe had to be put to the test of real life—was put prematurely to tests too cruelly hard. Liberated from bondage, he bears its marks upon him, and in moments of fright or annoyance displays the manners of his former masters. Hence, a false appearance of national unity for aggressive purposes—false, because it does not outlive the moments of annoyance and fright, and it is not in such spasms that any successful aggression can be carried out. But now the child has become a man, desires to keep house for himself, and asks why he, too, should not write a new chapter of the history of human progress opening with the words, "*We, the people of the at length United States of Germany* "—a guarantee not only of liberty, equality, and fraternity at home, but of lawful and friendly relations with the whole world.

IV. "THE NEXT WAR"

Only two possibilities lie in the way of the consummation of this high purpose. The one is that the growth of the German people toward full self-government may be interrupted by a great war, the other that, without immediate war, a continual thwarting of their legitimate desires by other States may still further aggravate animosities already sufficiently dangerous, and so enable the reactionaries to recover their failing hold upon the machine of government.

What war? In a book which has excited, because its author is an eminent cavalry officer, more attention than it merits, General Bernhardi says:¹ "In one way or another we must settle with France, if we wish to have elbow room for our world-policy. That is the first and most unconditional requirement of a sound German policy; and, as French hostility cannot be removed once and for all by pacific means, recourse must be had to force of arms. France must be so completely overthrown that she can never again stand in our way." No doubt, writing of this kind reflects the average mentality of the German military caste. No doubt, it is a dangerous mentality. No doubt, in Mr. Winston Churchill's words,² "there is a great danger that the study and development of force may lead men into the temptation of using the force they have thus developed. There is the danger to men and to nations of becoming fascinated by the machinery they have thus called into being." But this danger differs markedly according to the differing psychology of

¹ *Deutschland und der nächste Krieg*, p. 114.

² May 4, 1912. He had been speaking of the art of war as "the manifestation at some special place during the compass of a few months of shattering, blasting, overpowering force."

the men concerned. The German officer is frequently a highly instructed man—that is, he is familiar with the histories of Treitschke and other academic Jingoese, and popularizations of pseudo-Darwinian biology. He has been taught from the cradle to believe that force made the nation, and that, if it be now in danger, it is from peace, not from war. When he lays down the sword, and takes up the pen, he displays the floridity characteristic also of Berlinesque sculpture and architecture. His politics are those of the fire-eaters whom Prince Bülow told that Bismarck's greatness lay not in his clinking spurs, but in his just measure of men and things. He is a Romanticist with a twist. He writes fairy tales, and thinks them the last word in realistic statesmanship. If he ever has to go to war, he will drop his pen, forget his operative philosophy, save his children in the ranks from an heroic death as often as he can, and do his duty in face of the commonplace facts. His bark is very much worse than his bite; General Bernhardt, although he justifies the use of "cunning and deception" in the present "suppressed state of war" between rival nations, is certainly, in his life, an honourable man. But he wishes to emulate Bismarck's spurs and the Kaiser's moustache—to "look terrible," as Prince Bülow said.

It is as certain that Germany will not go to war with France from any such motives as these, as that France, with a newly enlarged colonial empire to absorb all her surplus strength, desires no quarrel with her neighbour. Nor does a broad review of German military strength in relation to modern conditions of warfare leave any ground for confidence as to the result of such a struggle, even if the possibility of a conflict on two fronts be excluded. The German army, with only 53 per cent. of

the competent men called up (against 84 per cent. in France), has a numerical advantage. But France would have no semi-circle of discontented provinces to repress, and her great superiority in the artillery arm is admitted. The immense new fortifications centring in Thionville (Diedenhofen), Metz, and Strassburg, on the one side, in Verdun, Toul, Epinal, and Belfort, on the other, practically rule out the contingency of any such rapid invasion, in either direction, as that of 1870. Anything the Germans would gain by hard study and hard discipline, they would probably lose by inferior initiative and closer attachment to pre-arranged plans. The merits of the favourite German enveloping movement by much dispersed forces, and of the French concentration of attack, must be left to experts to discuss.¹ But the deadlock of warfare

¹ The "conclusions" of the Military Correspondent of *The Times* upon the army manœuvres of 1911 contain, along with some warm praise, the following severe sentences: "The writer has not formed a wholly favourable opinion of the German Army, which appears to him to be living on a glorious past and to be unequal to the repute in which it is commonly held. . . . There is insufficient test of the initiative of commanders of any units, large or small. . . . There was nothing in the higher leading at the manœuvres of a distinguished character, and mistakes were committed which tended to shake the confidence of foreign spectators in the reputation of the command. The Infantry lacked dash, displayed no knowledge of the use of ground, intrenched themselves badly, were extremely slow in their movements, offered vulnerable targets at medium ranges, ignored the service of security, performed the approach marches in an old-time manner, were not trained to understand the connexion between fire and movement, and seemed totally unaware of the effect of modern fire. The Cavalry drilled well and showed some beautifully-trained horses, while the Cavalry of the Guard was well handled from the Army point of view, but the arm was in many ways exceedingly old-fashioned, the scouting was bad, and mistakes were made of which our Yeomanry would be ashamed. The Artillery, with its out-of-date *matériel* and slow and ineffective methods of fire, appeared so inferior that it can have no preten-

which universal service, immense expenditure, and ceaseless inventions have produced is not beyond the layman's understanding. Numbers and money are the fundamental and calculable factors. Such would be the overpressure of millions of men upon the short frontier of only about 170 miles between Longwy and Belfort, so impossible any reasoned use of these vast armies in this cockpit, that many German military writers have assumed a violation of Belgium, and perhaps also of Dutch and Swiss territory. That, however, would set the whole Continent aflame. Meanwhile, hostilities would cost each nation a million pounds a day (for 3,000,000 men in arms), and double that amount for the first six weeks

sions to measure itself against the French on anything approaching level terms. Finally, the dirigibles and aeroplanes presented the fourth arm in a relatively unfavourable light. The German Army, apart from its numbers, confidence in itself, and high state of organization, does not present any signs of superiority over the best foreign models, and in some ways does not rise above the level of the second rate. . . . It appears to the writer to have trained itself stale. Year in, year out, the same ceaseless round of intensive training has reduced the whole Army to a machine. Everybody does the same thing every hour of every day every year, and officers who have to wait 16 or 17 years for their companies are spent and tired long before they rise to high command. . . . Failing extreme measures, the best thing to restore new life to the Army would be to disband it for a year in order to give everybody, from top to bottom, a much needed rest. . . . The nation which, after all, gives up little more than half of its able-bodied sons to the Army, is becoming less militarist than formerly. The military spirit in the country is less predominant than of old, and the race for wealth is the consuming passion of the day. . . . Although the physique is still good, there has been a steady deterioration for many years past in the physical qualifications of recruits. The German Army has seen less of modern war than any other which stands in the front rank. . . . The contempt which it displays for the effects of modern fire, and professes to hold for the armies of rival States with which it may come in conflict, can only be set down to ignorance."—*Times*, October 28, 1911.

or two months. France would have by far the larger ready resources, but they would soon be exhausted ; and in both countries that emergency would come which Sir Edward Grey pictured, when the masses of victims of governmental insanity rise with the cry—" rather revolution than war."

Nor is it more probable that Germany will seek to test her navy against one overwhelmingly stronger in every respect. But the other danger remains. The costs of the present animosity are also a social peril. That there is no fatal necessity in international misunderstandings, the Anglo-French agreement of 1904 proved. They appear to be insoluble in the terms of current argument, or of the forces and alliances by which those arguments are supported. But when goodwill appears, all the factors are changed. Both sides of the needed transformation may be stated in the words of representative German writers. " Prince Bismarck, in a famous diplomatic speech in the Reichstag on January 10, 1885, pointed out," says Professor Erich Marcks, of Leipzig,¹ " that a breach of the peace between Germany and England had no reasonable foundation, and was improbable ; but he also said that the astonishment of Englishmen when their ' landlubbers of cousins, as they considered ' them, put to sea, was quite comprehensible. And then subtly, yet clearly, he showed that the English government would be wise to advise ' their subjects to moderate their expressions of surprise.' If the German to-day looks around him and behind him dispassionately, he will comprehend that, as a new power in the world, a fresh participator in actual international politics, he every-

¹ *England and Germany, their Relations in the Great Crises of European History*. London : Williams & Norgate.

where excites a certain uneasiness. The Englishman also may learn from the historical consideration of German development, and will be forced to recognize without that astonishment that the old Germany is dead and can never be resuscitated. Germany must and will develop and expand ; whoever wishes to live at peace with Germany must recognize that fact. The question is a vital one for Germany, an absolute need of its existence. Germany cannot turn back without risk of deterioration, of mutilation, of destruction, and, therefore, without a life and death struggle. The whole world must reckon with that fact. No one can deny that the interests of England and Germany create friction. That friction may have far-reaching consequences ; no one can say beforehand whether or how, but the possibility is there. Is the necessity also there ? Are such conflicts insoluble ? Must England and Germany, as so many declare, conduct themselves as enemies ? Cannot both nations find elbow-room in our world, so immensely vaster to-day than in former ages ? Can they not acknowledge each other according to their nature and extent ? ”

If there is an obstacle of temper on the one side, there is an obstacle of constitution on the other. On the eve of the general elections, on December 29, 1911, the great mid-German newspaper, the *Frankfurter Zeitung*, spoke with wise plainness and courage on this point. The only real cure for official incompetence and public dissatisfaction lay, it said, in a fundamental alteration of system in the direction of Parliamentary government. While Germany was numbered among “ the most reactionary States of the world ”, she could not hope to inspire confidence. “ If we in Germany will for once adopt without prejudice the English point of view, we shall be

obliged to admit that the distrust on the other side of the English Channel is not altogether unfounded. If we had to listen to such utterances from the mouth of a foreign Sovereign, we too would become restive, and take thought for the strengthening of our line of defence. At present we can only ask England not to take so seriously the utterances in question, since we have long had the experience that great words are not followed by great deeds. We know that the Kruger telegram, the challenge to the yellow races, the speech at Damascus, the trip to Tangier, the sending of the *Panther*, and so on, were only outward gestures which remained without any corresponding consequences. This is one of the weakest points of our foreign policy. We say to the English again and again: 'The German nation is absolutely peaceably-minded, and wishes to live on terms of peace and friendship with England just as much as with all other nations.' This makes no impression on them, since they answer us, 'We are glad to believe that the German nation is peaceably-minded, but the German nation does not make German policy. Her policy is made in a quarter which is absolute, irresponsible, and incalculable; and for that reason we attach merely a platonic, and never a practical, value to the national professions of peace.' What answer are we to make to that?"

The best and only effective answer was, in fact, given a month later by seven millions of German voters. Security and liberty—these are the two poles between which all the hopes mankind seeks are to be found. Set in opposition by small and ungenerous minds, they must be reconciled in any true statecraft. The reader who has followed us thus far through the many failures and the hard-won successes of German history, who can view sympathetically

the sufferings by which this kindred people has paid for the less favourable position Nature gave it, who realizes the need of a closer union of all civilized nations in face of the problems of the twentieth century, will hope, for the whole world's sake, that the powers of faith may overcome the powers of fear, and differences be forgot in a wider comprehension.

THE END

INDEX

- Adalbert, Archbishop, 27
 Agadir Incident, The, 446
 Age-constitution of the Population, 451
 Agriculture, 3, 7, 8, 16, 17, 29, 87, 163, 184, 188, 231-5, 449, 452, 456-7, 461-6, 470-2
 Alcohol, Consumption of, 453
 Alexander I, Emperor, 161
 Alexander II, 299
 Alliance, Prusso-Italian (1866), 224
 Prusso-Russian (1863), 222
 Austro-German (1879), 327
 the Triple (1882), 300, 327, 412
 of Three Kaisers (1884), 326, 332-3
 Franco-Russian (1891), 333-5, 400
 Anglo-Japanese (1902), 401
 Alsace-Lorraine, 9, 29, 59, 64, 65, 74, 82, 261, 264, 268, 270, 277-80, 296, 413
 American and German tariffs compared, 471
 Anabaptists, 54, 57, 58
 Anglo-German relations, 328-34, 400-48, 476-7, 509-12
 Anno, Archbishop, 27
 Anti-Semitism, 319-21
 Arbitration Treaty, Anglo-German, 441
 Armaments, danger of competitive, 335-6, 433
 Army, The, 297, 301, 336-7, 388-9, 454-6, 506-8
 Arndt, 162, 176
 Arnim, Count H., 298
 Art in Berlin, 378-81
 Auerswald, 207
 Augusta, Queen and Empress, 206, 218, 263, 293
 Austrasia, 22
 Austria, 22, 34, 35, 61, 65, 72, 74-6, 81, 83, 87, 91, 156-8, 162, 164, 169, 170, 177, 179, 188-9, 204, 209, 221, 222-8, 326
 Bach, J. S., 143-5
 Baden, 9, 17, 64, 85, 159, 160, 172, 180, 206, 234, 239
 Bagdad Railway, 419-23
 Bamberger, 301, 320
 Battles: Tours, 23; Lützen (1632), 62; Warsaw (1656), 72; Blenheim (1704), 74; Rosbach, Leuthen, Minden, 76; Valmy, 81, 129; Marengo, Austerlitz, 83; Jena-Auerstädt, 86; Friedland, 86; Aspern, Wagram, 90; Lützen, Bautzen, Dresden, 91; Leipzig, Waterloo, 92; Magenta, Solferino, 209; Königgrätz, 226; Wörth, Spicheren, Vionville, Mars-la-Tour, St. Privat, Gravelotte, Sedan, 260; Metz, 201

- Bauer, B., 109
 Bavaria, 4-5, 22, 25, 33, 61, 62, 65, 75, 85, 91, 159, 172, 175, 187, 210-11, 225, 234, 239, 240, 255, 269, 291, 502⁴
 Bebel, August, 389-10, 312, 492
 Beethoven, 96-7, 146, 153
 Bennigsen, R. von, 212, 238, 240, 301
 Bernhardt, General, 505-6
 Bernstein, Herr E., 488-9
 Bethmann-Hollweg, Dr. M., 207, 224
 Bethmann-Hollweg, Herr von (Chancellor), 280, 483, 496-9
 Birth-rates, decline of, 450-2
 Bismarck, Otto von, 98, 113, 140, 150, 170, 175, 190, 200, 217-361, 461-3, 491
 Bismarck, Count Herbert, 329
 Black Death, 40
 Blockade, The Napoleonic, 86, 186
 Blücher, 90, 91
 Boers and Boer War, 403-5, 411-16, 439
 Bruno, Archbishop, 27
 Brunswick, Duke of, 81
 Bucher, Lothar, 230, 244
 Bulow, Count, afterwards Prince, 284, 405, 408-10, 412-13, 464, 483, 490-6, 498, 506
 Bund, The, 157, 196, 202 (*see* Federal Diet)
 Bureaucracy, 71, 79, 160, 165-6, 198
Burschenschaften, 161
 Calvin, 44, 57, 88, 99
 Canals, 7, 316, 474
 Caprivi, Count, 252, 282, 463, 490
 Centre party, The Catholic, 164, 208, 286-302, 375, 482-3, 499-501
 Character, German, 18-9, 25, 42-4, 66-8, 93, 95-6, 135-8, 142, 144, 160, 197-9, 233, 256-8, 261, 265-8, 273, 276, 337-40, 502-4
 Charles Martel, 23
 China Convention of 1900, 417
 Chivalry, 17, 20, 31, 45
 Chlodwig (481-511), 21
 Christian Socialists, 314-22
 Cities, mediæval, and Leagues of, 36, 37-8, 45, 47-52, 83
 City life, 452-3
 Climate, 2-4, 44, 192
 Colonies, 330-1, 333-4, 401, 417, 428, 447, 492
 Commercial travellers, 417-9, 423-4
 treaties, 189, 462-4
 "Communist Manifesto," 110
 Conference of Aachen (1818), 161
 of Karlsbad (1819), 161
 of Vienna (1820), 161
 of Troppau, (1820), 162
 of Algeciras (1906), 444
 Congress of Rastadt (1797), 83
 Vienna (1815), 156-7
 Berlin (1878), 326
 Conscription, 70-1, 89, 212-4, 454-6
 Crown Prince, The, 494
 Crusades, 27, 28, 32-3, 36, 39
 Dahlmann, 140, 159
Daily Telegraph Interview, 392, 405, 413, 414-5, 432, 492-4
 Death rate, 450, 453
 Debt, Imperial, 495-7
 Delcassé, M., 410-13, 442-3
 Descartes, 100

- "Deutschland, Deutschland
 über alles," 112, 139
 Dreikaiserbund, 326, 332
 Duelling, 385-6
 Dürer, Albrecht, 40
- Education, 67, 68, 89, 198-9,
 317, 453
 Edward VII, King, 434-44
 Emigration, 452
 Emperors of the Holy Roman
 Empire, 17, 30 ; Election
 of, 34-5, 36, 42, 49, 52, 64
 Charles the Great, 24-5, 29
 Lewis (Ludwig) I, 29
 Lothar, 29
 Henry I, 30
 Otto I, 30
 Otto II, 27
 Conrad II, 30, 33
 Henry III, 28
 Henry IV, 28
 Frederick I, Barbarossa, 33,
 35
 Frederick II, 33
 Rudolph of Hapsburg, 34,
 35, 45
 Charles IV, 36
 Maximilian, 52
 Charles V, 49, 52, 56, 59
 Ferdinand I, 59, 61
 Charles VI, 74
 Leopold II, 81
 Francis II, 85
- Ems Interview and Despatch,
 249-54
 Engels, F., 108-9
 English and German develop-
 ment compared, 14, 25,
 31, 38, 45, 59, 78, 99, 110,
 115, 116-7, 151, 161, 164,
 183-5, 196, 198, 233, 324,
 418-9, 440, 472-3, 477-81,
 485, 502-3
- Entente, Anglo-French, 430,
 435, 441-2
 Anglo-Russian, 444
 Erasmus, 44, 55
 Erfurt Parliament, 180
 Eschenbach, Wolfram von, 39
 Eugénie, Empress, 247, 261
 Eulenburg Scandals, 492, 494
- Falk, Dr., 292, 300
 Federal Diet (1815-48), 156,
 159, 161-2, 172, 174-5 ;
 (1848-67), 181, 201, 222
 (see Reichstag)
- Feudalism, 19-24, 28-37, 46
 Feuerbach, 109
 Fichte, J. G., 106, 114, 140
 Finance, Imperial, 296-7, 300,
 316, 495-8
 Franco-German Crises (1874-
 5), 299 ; (1911), 445-7
 Frankfurt Parliament, 176-80
 Franks, The, 15-16, 21-24
 Frederick of Nuremberg, 34
 Frederick William, Elector of
 Brandenburg, 63, 73
 Frederick, The Empress, 218,
 263-7, 377, 434
- Frederick Karl, the "Red
 Prince," 226
 Free Trade period, 185-191,
 296, 461
- Freiligrath, 140
 French and German develop-
 ment, 14, 23, 25, 29, 37,
 45, 46, 63, 78, 103, 114-5,
 117-8, 121, 133, 151
- Fuggers, The, 49
- Geflick, Prof., 299, 350-1
 Geographical features, 2-12
 13-14, 17, 189
 Gervinus, A., 140, 176
 Gladstone, 329, 331, 334

- Gluck, 145
 Gneisenau, 89
 Goethe, Wolfgang von, 44,
 94, 97, 103-5, 116-130
 Golden Bull, The, 35
 Gramont, 248-50
 Great Germany Party, 179, 209
 Grimm, the brothers, 130, 140,
 165
 Grotius, 69
 Gustavus Adolphus, 46, 61
 Gutenberg, Johann, 41, 43

 Hague Conferences, The, 335
 Handel, 145
 Hanover, 84, 156, 165, 174,
 188, 225, 227, 231-2, 235
 Hanseatic League, 39, 47-51,
 64
 Hapsburg, House of, 33, 52,
 56, 63, 74-6, 77
 Hardenberg, 87, 89, 160-1
 Hartmann, E. von, 111
 Hassenpflug, 172
 Hatto, Archbishop, 27
 Haydn, 146
 Hegel, 107-9, 135, 140-1
 Heine, 112, 114-5, 131, 138-9
 Henry the Lion, 33
 Herder, 102, 124, 127
 Hermann (Arminius), 15
 Herwegh, 140
 Herz, Henrietta, 135
 Hesse, Electoral, Constitu-
 tional question, 172-3, 181
 Hildebrand, Pope, 28
 Historians, German, 102, 116,
 141, 233
 Hohenlohe - Schillingsfürst,
 Prince Chlodwig, 160, 278,
 299, 490, 491
 Hohenlohe, Prince Adolf von,
 216
 Hohenzollern (territory of), 5,
 24; (House of), 33, 50,
 52, 63, 77, 87, 167, 202,
 263 (*see also* Prussia, Kings
 of)
 Hohenzollern Candidature,
 243-53
 Hohenzollern, Prince Karl
 Anton, 207, 244, 249
 Prince Leopold of, 244-5, 250
 Holbein, 40
 Holland, independence of, 60,
 64, 508
 Holy Alliance, 162, 230
 Coat of Trêves, 164
 Humboldt, Wilhelm von, 89,
 135-6
 Hussite Wars, 53, 55, 65
 Hutten, Ulrich von, 32

 Illegitimate Births, 451
 Income tax, 460
 Industries, 3, 6, 7, 9, 11, 37, 39,
 48-9, 162, 186, 275, 295-6,
 322, 452, 454, 457-61
 Insurance Laws, National, 316-
 7, 465
 Interregnum, The Great, 35
 Invasions, Barbarian, 13, 27,
 33, 45
 Iron and Steel trades, 458,
 466-9
 Italy and Germany, 33, 35-6,
 42-3, 56, 208-9, 211, 225,
 241

 Jesuits, 56, 60, 115, 134, 160,
 163, 172, 292, 302
 Jews, 319-21, 456

 Kant, 94, 101-6
 Karl August, Duke, of Saxe-
 Weimar, 95, 126-30
 Kartells, 467-9

- Kiel Canal, 331
 Kinkel, Gottfried, 140
 Kleist, 137
 Köpenick, "The Captain of," 491
 Kotzebue, 161
 Krupp, 243
Kulturkampf, 281, 292-300, 311, 376

 Landlordism, 79-80, 87-8, 184
 Lasker, 301, 320
 Lassalle, F., 202, 308-9
 Lauenburg, 223
 Leibnitz, 101
 Lessing, 119, 132
 Liebknecht, 309-10
 List, Prof. F., 187
 Local Government, 88-9
 London, German traders in, 48
 Ludwig, King, of Bavaria, 149, 172, 175
 Luise, Queen, of Prussia, 86, 205-6, 392
 Luther, Martin, 38, 40, 43, 44, 46, 53-9, 99, 287-8
 Luxemburg, 156, 190, 240-1

 "Made in Germany," 425
 Magdeburg, Massacre of, 61
 Mainz proclaims republic, 82
 Manteuffel, 181, 203-4, 207
 "March Days" (1848) in Berlin, 169, 206
 Maria Theresa, 74-7
 Marine, Mercantile, 459
 Marriage, Civil, 292 rates, 451
 Marschall von Bieberstein, Baron, 404-5, 417, 444
 Marx, Karl, 98, 109-10, 115, 142, 172, 199, 230, 303-9, 315, 320, 325, 489
 Mayors of the Palace, 21-2
 Mendelssohn, F., 147-8
Mensur, The, 384-5
 Mercantilism, 71-2
 Merck, 117
 Metternich, 90, 92, 134, 157-65, 187
 Middle Ages, Germany in the, 19-38, 193
 Military developments (medieval), 19-20, 29; (modern), 46, 61, 70-1, 79, 89-90, 226-7, 242, 318, 505-9; (*see* Conscription, Prussian Army, Wars, Franco-German)
 Millionaires, 459
 Mining, 458
 Ministries, Prussian, 88
 Minnelieder, 39
 Missionaries, 22, 26
 Moltke, General H. von, 213, 217, 226, 241, 251-4, 299
 Morier, Sir Robert, 88, 160, 165, 172, 196, 210, 215, 218, 242, 267
 Moritz, Duke, of Saxony, 46, 59
 Morocco Question, The, 441-7, 490
 Mozart, 96-7, 146
 Municipal enterprise, 317
 Munster, Massacre of, 54
 Münzer, 57

 Napoleon I and Germany, 82-93, 117, 130
 Napoleon III, 204, 298-10, 217, 224-5, 228, 240-1 (*see* Wars, Franco-German)
 Navy, The, 330, 405-7, 427-34, 439-40, 448
 Neustria, 22-3
 Nibelungenlied, 39, 133

- Nibelung's Ring (Wagner), 151-2
 Nietzsche, F., 105, 111-4
 North German Confederation, 190, 227, 234, 235-7
 Occupations, Census of, 454, 457
 Olmütz, "Capitulation" of Prussia at, 172, 181-2
 Palm, Execution of, 86
 Papal States, 24
 Parties, Political, 164, 177, 207, 216, 237-9, 291, 293, 297, 300-2, 482, 485-90, 499-501
 Peace of Passau (1552), 59
 of Augsburg (1555), 59
 of Westphalia (1648), 63
 of Ryswick (1697), 74
 of Utrecht (1713), 74
 of Rastatt (1714), 74
 of Paris (1763), 77
 of Villa Franca (1859), 209-10
 of Prague (1866), 227, 235
 of Frankfurt (1871), 269
 Peasantry, Condition of the, 20, 31-2, 52; (insurrection of, 152), 53-4
 Pictism, 67
 Pillnitz, Declaration of, 77
 Pippin the Short, 24
 Pitt buys Russian troops, 83
 Pius IX, Pope, 290
 Poland, Partitions of, 77
 Polish question, 163, 222; (in Prussia), 280-5
 Population, Statistics of, 450-4
 Portuguese Colonies, 410-11
 Potsdam Agreement, 421, 423
 Press, Bismarck and the, 234-5, 245-8, 276, 294, 298-9
 Prices, Effect of Tariff on, 462-3, 464-6, 470-3
 Protective Tariff, The, 273, 296-7, 457, 460-75
 Prussia (Geography of), 6-8; (tribes), 16; (modern), 51, 63, 64, 68-77, 84-5, 86, 91, 156-7, 162, 165-72, 185, 196, 204
 Prussia, Kings of:—
 Frederick I, 73-4
 Frederick William I, 75
 Frederick II ("The Great"), 75-7, 79, 124, 186, 280
 Frederick William II, 80, 81
 Frederick William III, 80, 84-6, 88, 91, 140, 158, 163, 167
 Frederick William IV, 164, 167-71, 175, 178, 179, 201, 205, 215
 William I (Regent), 205, 209-15; (King), 216, 271, (Emperor), 271-348
 Frederick III (Crown Prince), 218, 220, 225, 263, 271, 342-51
 See William II, King and Emperor.
 Prussia, Parliamentary institutions in, 158-9, 168-70; (Constitution of 1850), 171, 178, 207, 216, 219, 323-4, 474-5, 481-4
 Prussian Army, 70-1, 89-90, 91, 212-7, 242, 255-69
 Puttkamer, 300, 320
 Reformation, The (economics of), 37-8, 39-59
 Reichstag, (of North German Confederation), 231, 236-7, 239, 255; (of the German Empire), 269-71, 286, 301, 318, 484-8, 501

- Renaissance, The, 39-44
- "Reptile Fund," Bismarck's, 234-5, 276, 294
- Revolution of 1830, 138, 165
 - of 1848, 169-82, 197
- Rhine, Confederation of The, 85, 91
- Rhineland, 8-12, 34, 45, 47, 48, 52, 58, 64, 65, 83, 163, 376
- Roman Church in Germany, 20, 25-8, 34, 36, 42-3, 55, 60, 63, 83-4, 134, 163-4, 286-93, 374-6
- Romantics, 110, 119, 130-9, 141, 146-8, 150-3, 167, 320, 380
- Rome, Influence of, 14-5, 28, 30, 33, 42, 290
- Roon, General A. von, 213, 214, 216, 217, 251-4
- Russia and Germany, 157, 161-2, 165, 181, 222, 326-8, 332-3
- Sachsengänger*, 283
- Saxony, 5, 6, 16, 33-4, 64-5, 75, 76, 86, 91, 165, 172, 187, 283
- Scharnhorst, 89
- Schelling, 106, 108, 114
- Schiller, 112, 117-20, 125, 127
- Schill's rising, 90
- Schlegels, The, 130, 132, 135
- Schleswig - Holstein Question, 173-4, 181, 222-4, 227
- Schmalkaldic League, 59
- Schmalz, 159, 161
- Schmoller, Prof., 312, 314
- Schopenhauer, A., 100, 110-12, 152, 233
- Schubert, 147
- Schumann, 147
- Schwarz, Berthold, 40
- Seaports, 8, 86, 87, 186, 190, 316 (*see* Hanseatic League)
- Serfs and serfdom, 20, 31-2, 41, 69, 79, 83, 87-8, 163
- Skiernevitze meeting, 332
- Socialism and the Social Democrats, 109, 141, 197, 286, 302-25, 482-4, 488-90, 500-1
- South land North contrasted, 34, 64, 142, 144, 156, 239, 481, 490
- Spinoza, 100-1
- State Socialism, 315-8
- Stein, Baron von, 87-91, 141, 157, 159, 187
- Stirner, Max, 110
- Stöcker, Adolf, 314, 321
- Strassburg, Gottfried von, 39
- Sugar Convention, International, 464
- Suicide, 453-4
- Tangier incident, The, 442
- Tariff (*see* Protective Tariff)
- Teutonic Knights, 36
- Thirty Years' War, 51, 59-68
- Tilly, 46, 61
- Tirpitz, Admiral von, 497-9
- Torture, 69
- Trade, Foreign, 424-7
- Trade Unions, 312
- Treaty of Basal (1795), 83
 - of Kalisch (1813), 91
 - of St. Petersburg (1863), 222
 - of Gastein (1865), 223
 - of Frankfurt (1871), 269
 - of Skiernevitze (1884), 332-3
- Treitschke, 233, 242, 320, 506
- Tribal groups, The Teutonic, 15-8, 21
- Truce of God, 26
- Tübingen School, 109

- Turkey, German interests in, 409-10, 417-23, 444-5
 Tweedmouth letter, The, 431-2
- Unemployed, 459-60
- Universities, 5, 7, 9, 10, 11, 40, 41, 67, 89, 97, 161, 199, 233, 453
- Verdum, Partition of, 29
- Vidcke, Baron von, 207
- Vogelweide, Walther von der, 39
- Vorparlament, 175-6
- Wages, 473
- Wagner, R., 111-2, 148-55
- Wallenstein, 46, 61, 62
- Warfare, effects of, 32-3, 46, 53-4, 60, 63-8, 69-70, 92-3, 138, 194-5, 233, 261-8, 274, 295-7
- Wars, after, 1648: With France, 73-4; with the Turks, 73; of Spanish Succession, 74; Silesian Wars, 75-6; Seven Years' War, 76, 124; French Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars, 81-93; War of Liberation, 91; with Denmark (1848-50), 174, 177-8, 181; (1864), 223; Prusso - Austrian (1866), 224-8; Franco - German War, 240-71
- War Songs, 57, 82, 114, 139, 256, 261
- Wealth and poverty, 459-60
- Weber, K. von, 147
- Weimar, 6, 80, 118, 120, 125-9
- William II, King and Emperor:—
 Youth and education, 346; character, 351-2, 362-3, 367, 371-2, 377, 380-1, 393-7, 408; first State work, 332, 347; and his father and mother, 347-8, 378; journeys, 352, 368; and Bismarck, 347, 349, 353-60; and the Pope, 368, 374-6; and Austria, 357-8; and King Edward, 439; and the "Camarilla," 490-2; and the *Daily Telegraph* interview, 492-4; as speaker, 352, 362
 on the army, war, and peace, 352, 369-71, 386-91, 407
 on labour and Socialism, 352-4, 383, 390
 on divine right, 363-4, 392
 on present discontents, 365-6, 373-4, 387, 490
 on religion, 367-70, 372-6
 on Art, 377-81
 on Education, 381-4
 on the *Mensur* and Duelling, 384-6
 on Sea-Power and the Navy, 391, 402-3, 405-7
- Woman, Status of, 17-8, 42, 65-8, 263, 266, 325, 392-3, 395, 457-8
- Württemberg, 5, 16, 156, 158, 159, 165, 187, 225, 234, 239, 255, 269
- Yorck, 91
- "Young Germany," 138, 320
- Zollverein, 166, 182-91, 272, 275, 296, 316

